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UNDERSTANDING THE PERCEPTION OF BANGLADESHI SMES TOWARDS MARKETING OF FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

Literature depicts Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a dominating role in improving the economic status of a country, especially in developing countries. However, access to credit is a major problem which SMEs face worldwide. The problem of financing is dealt by offering of different financial products like bank loan, line of credit by the banks to the SMEs. As marketing communicates the potential clients about the products and services, it is crucial to understand SMEs viewpoint towards marketing financial products. Hence, the present study attempts to capture the perspectives (i.e., benefits and associated risks) of people associated with SMEs and SMEs' owners towards the marketing of financial products in a developing country like Bangladesh.

Keywords*:* Bangladesh, SME, Financial Product, Credit.

INTRODUCTION

SME's are considered as the backbone of an economy due to their contribution to a country's GDP and economic growth (Mannan et al., 2016; Franco & Haase, 2010). SMEs also play a key role in improving the economic status of a country (Indrawati, 2012). Presently, developed countries use SMEs as a strategic move to develop local competencies which significantly influences competitiveness for industrial development within and outside the country (Ibid). As such, SME's comprises 96% of all manufacturers in the USA (Qian, 2002).

Aside from contributing to GDP, SMEs contribute to job creation, increasing liquidity and develops export orientations. For example, Anand (2015) regarded SMEs as the powerhouse of growth and job development for global entrepreneurship and significantly contributes to the country's GDP and exports. According to Ensari & Karabay (2014), SMEs eyeing global success should focus on global competition & industry characteristics to develop competitive and strategic capabilities.

However, lack of capital is a major constraint for SMEs growth and survival (Abe et al. 2015). This is a major hindrance for SMEs as the availability of finance is essential for SMEs to start-up and grow (Armstrong et al. 2013). As a result, SMEs are unable to utilize the benefits of globalization and face consistent pressure from international firms and cheaper imports due to lack of financial literacy (Anand, 2015). While, Love & Roper (2015) have stressed on promoting accessibility to finance for SMEs to increase their liquidity and cash flows, providing greater scope for investment in innovation and export development.

However, these challenges can be mitigated by building relationships among banks and SMEs to support each other. According to the literature, developing a strong relationship between SMEs and banks can reduce the financial problems faced by SMEs (Han et al. 2012). Literature has shown that how helping SMEs in financial

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distress by local banks result is a low recurrence of financial losses, low probability of bankruptcy and have greater chances of sustained recovery from the financial distress (Iwanicz-Drozdowska et al., 2018). The major issues faced by the SMEs as suggested by the literature include access to finance, information asymmetry and efficacy of measures like credit scoring for SMEs (Thampy, 2010). Therefore the ability of banks to create and maintain customer satisfaction will determine the successful relationship among SMEs and banks alike. As customer satisfaction provides a competitive advantage, over competitors (Hamidi & Safareyeh, 2018); to develop the relationship with customers is an important function in the banking sector (Fernandes & Pinto, 2019).

To address this issue, this study highlights SMEs (i.e., owners) perceived benefits and associated risks regarding financial products of banks within Bangladesh. According to Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary (2018), 99% of enterprises in Bangladesh (in 2013-2014) are SMEs; among which 75% are SMEs with non-agricultural employment. Moreover, the banking sector of Bangladesh has always been an important sector of Bangladesh's economy, since it significantly contributes to the other economic sectors through credit payment, recovery and growth trends (Ahmed &Ahmed, 2018).

Although few studies have contributed to this discipline, opportunities are left open to build them. For example, Rahman et. al. (2019) have addressed the service gaps of the banking sector and SMEs in Bangladesh; however, they have focused on the limitations of the SME and not on the financial products of the bank. While Yoshino and Taghizadeh-Hesary (2018) suggested methods to ease SME financing (i.e., Credit Guarantee Schemes, developing credit Risk database and having specialized banks) rather than how banks themselves can help SMEs and vice versa. The results of the study offer critical, theoretical and managerial insights into the relationships among banks and SMEs in Bangladesh.

The paper is arranged by first addressing the theoretical context to which the study was founded based on the literature review, followed by research methodology and data analysis sections. Finally, the paper presents discussion and conclusions to highlight the implications of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SMEs Financial Constraints

Berry et al. (2004) studied the lending practices of banks in the UK to SMEs. The aim of the study was to identify the level of involvement of banks in providing finance to SMEs. It was ascertained that only a small number of European banks were financing the SMEs. Further, it was revealed that uniformity was not there in the lending process as few of them adopted the going concern approach, others adopted the gone concern approach; while few of them adopted a mixed approach. It was concluded that with less involvement, European banks are unlikely to influence the lending environment for SMEs in the UK. The authors called for future research tracking the role of domestic and foreign banks in lending the SMEs in the UK. Further, Focusing on the lender's perspective, Aysan et al. (2016) analyzed the bank's willingness to finance SMEs and their processing ability of portfolio financing in Turkey. Islamic banks were given prime importance and compared with conventional banks. It was found that Islamic banks are more inclined towards financing SMEs in comparison to conventional banks. Further, it was discovered that the bank's loan portfolio quality is comparable to conventional banks. Variables utilized in the study's regression model include 'bank fundamentals' in terms of equity ratio, liquidity ratio, deposits ratio and profits ratio; second, 'bank controls' in terms of branch size, bank age and bank size. They considered banking for SME's as a viable venture. In a similar study, Daly &Frikha (2016) investigated the impact of bank indicators (including profitability, control variables, bank development, interest variable, state rate and dummy variables). A comparison was made between conventional banks and Islamic banks. Islamic banks were found to contributing better to the economic growth in comparison to conventional banks with reference to the dummy variables. Further, it was found that the development of non-usurious banks strengthens economic growth. Considering the quality aspect provided by Islamic banks, Maswadeh (2014) measured the satisfaction of SMEs towards the service quality provided by Islamic banks in Jordan. It was found that SMEs were satisfied with banks on the six dimensions of service quality; which are compliance, reliability, tangibility, empathy, assurance and responsiveness. However, reliability, responsiveness and tangibility were the least satisfied dimensions in comparison to the other three dimensions used in the study. The study has been specific to Jordan and hence, the findings lack universality or stronger implications for SMEs worldwide.

Chowdhury (2007) explored the constraints faced by SMEs in the Bangladeshi context. The identified constraints include inadequate infrastructural facilities, SMEs owners lacks trust in the legal and regulatory framework, lack of financial support, education and training system of the country, unstable economic and political climate, social culture, and SMEs' need for assistance in the context of financial help, R&D facilities, and technological assistance. However, the study provided a framework to overcome these barriers. The suggestions are the development of a market-oriented economy grounded in a sound legal and regulatory environment, introducing entrepreneurial education and training, and offering government support and assistance program. Another study in Asia pacific context by Abe et al. (2015) focused on financing small and medium enterprises in Asia and the Pacific region. They argued that the issue which SMEs face in their initial year is the availability of the right type of financing at an affordable cost. Further, they stated that the owners do not manage their working capital efficiently. They suggested that SMEs should maximize their working capital, opt for micro-financing, get financing from commercial banks through public credit guarantee agencies, get financial assistance from the government, and should balance debt and equity. SMEs should reduce the asymmetry of information, facilitate equity funding, combine financial services with business development services, and strengthen the relationship with the banks. Other challenges that SMEs face include inadequate financing, limited capital and limited access to international markets and knowledge management.

In the South Asian aspect, Bilal et al. (2016) undertook a comparative study of the three neighbouring countries; China, India and Pakistan identifying the barriers to the growth of SMEs. Access to finance was not found as an obstacle to the growth of Chines SMEs, but it was relevant for Pakistan and India. However, infrastructure, workforce and corruption were the impediments to SMEs growth in all the countries. The innovation process had a positive mediation effect on SMEs growth. The negative indirect effect of tax rate was found on the SMEs growth in all the three countries. Recent findings of Baker et al. (2020) highlighted that Indian SMEs prefer internal financing in contrast to external financing. They prefer internal funding, followed by bank lending and then they have a preference for government funding. Further, they focus on short term financing to maintain liquidity. It was ascertained that there exists a significant difference between financing preferences and practices by Indian SMEs. Firm characteristics like business state, size, sector, legal status and export activity determined the financing preferences of the SMEs (Ibid). Moreover, owners' characteristics were also found to significantly influence the financing preference.

Surveying the literature, Beck (2013) indicated that financial deepening can be used to solve the problem of SMEs' financing constraints via this route leads to poverty reduction and employment generation. Moreover, it was suggested that policy interventions have to be done level-wise; ranging from long term institution building to short terms regulatory changes. Further, it was stated that different policy interventions are required for different countries. The research called for different methodologies to assess different interventions.

SMEs Banking Relationships

In the Malaysian context, Al-Alak (2014) studied the impact of marketing activities on relationship quality with reference to the banking sector. It was identified that marketing actions enable bank managers in the development and implementation of a relationship marketing strategy to increase marketing effectiveness and efficiency. Further, it was inferred that the relationship is more likely to develop when the client perceives it important. Though client perception is based on past experiences with the bank, Durkin et al. (2014) studied the role of social media in improving the relationship between banks and SMEs. It was found that bankers perceive fewer benefits from social media in terms of improved communication; while SMEs owners perceive it as an effective form of communication developing the relationship. Moreover, it was condemned that social media would be effective in developing the said relationship, though it needs to be complemented with personal face-to-face relation building. Top management support, organization culture, relative advantages, regulatory environment and manager's innovativeness and ICT knowledge influence the ICT adoption in SMEs (AlBar& Hoque, 2019). The study was conducted in the context of rural Saudi Arabia (Ibid).

Eriksson et al. (2016) showed through their analysis that internationalizing the relationship of SME's with the organization and banks leads to growth in business relationships internationally. Further, they found that SMEs' relationship with host country bank decreases the investment by internationalizing firms having a business relationship; without affecting SMEs growth. However, the host country bank relationship with the host country organization increases investments in the relationship indirectly. Apart, it was found that a relationship with home country bank increases the investment in the international business relationship, but it is less conducive to the growth in the relationship. The authors stated that host country banks have good knowledge about internationalizing firm and its business prospects and have good information about the host country as well, thus they can finance SMEs and the international firm will not need relationship-specific investments. In another study, Iturralde et al. (2010) considered the firm's size, leverage, profitability, age, internet banking, and 'importance of minimizing borrowing costs' as the determinants of banking relationships. Factors influencing the choice of banks by the SMEs include service and speed, electronic banking, price, personal treatment, loyalty and number of branches (Ibid). Firm size, the strength of legal rights, depth of credit information, experience of the top manager and firm's export orientation were found as the strong determinants of SMEs access to finance at the sub-regional level mainly for the west-African region (Quartey et al. 2017).

Han et al. (2012) conducted a research study in the European context to check the usage and impact of bank support on the SMEs in the UK. It was found that entrepreneur's and enterprise's characteristics determine the usage of bank support by the SMEs while taking financial decisions. In addition, it was found that SMEs can significantly reduce their financial problems by using the bank support service via maintaining long term relationship with the banks. Contrary to these findings, Wang et al. (2020) found that banking market concentration will improve credit access for SMEs. The study was done in the European context. The adverse effect of market power was found for those firms that don't share information, are riskier and dependent on the external source of financing. It was stated that the banks enjoying greater market power are likely to engage in relationship lending with the SMEs. Further, Han et al. (2015) assessed how the concentration of banks market and bank relationship influences the three main sources of small firm's liquidity which are cash, line of credit and trade credit. It was found that in highly concentrated markets small firms are financially constrained and they face the problem of less cash holding, expensive trade credit, inaccessibility to the line of credit and sometimes they face heavy penalty late payment of trade credit. Thus, it was suggested to increase the competition as more banks provide more liquidity to the small firms. On another aspect, relationship banking was found to be improving the liquidity of small firms reducing the negative effect of market concentration.

Mendizabal et al. (2014) assessed the guaranteed rationing with respect to the relationship between banks and SMEs in Spain. It was concluded that the closer the relationship SMEs maintain with the bank, they can adverse the effect of credit constraints during the financial crisis by having a guarantee from the bank. The second findings indicated that the problem of asymmetric information is solved when a close relationship is maintained between the banks and the SMEs, which leads to an increase in information sharing. The duration was not found as a significant variable for the rationing. Lastly, it was concluded that SMEs must maintain a close relationship but with fewer banks, which will foster a high level of trust enabling them easy access to credit and decrease in rationing. Motta & Sharma (2019) suggested that lending technologies can mitigate information asymmetries for lenders, which increases the firm's likelihood of access to finance. The difficulty to access finance externally; the selection between one bank and other banks is a prime issue for SMEs to avoid credit rationing or in order to improve their financial conditions (Refait-Alexandre & Serve, 2020). Further, the author discovered that a relationship exists between multiple banking relationships and the firm's characteristics. It was concluded that large size, high performing and innovative firms develop multiple banking relationships. Further, talking from the management aspect, the 'trust' perspective of CEO was found to be affecting the number of banking relationships, which firm maintains (Ibid).

SMEs Operations

Finance lending to SMEs in emerging economies and economies with the weaker financial system has a strong impact on the bank's stability (Brei et al. 2019). Earlier, Fidrmuc&Hainz (2010) studied the default rates of bank loans by SMEs in Slovakia. It was identified that default rates were higher in Slovakia in comparison to the US and Sweden. However, the authors suggested that Slovakian banks were earning higher margins, which should compensate for their high risk. The loan default factors include high indebtedness and low profitability and liquidity, which were similar to the financial markets of the developed countries. These factors were suggested to be used for the evaluation of potential risks of outstanding credits in the region and the other member states. Further, it was found that the business of a natural person is less likely to default in comparison to legal entities with respect to the restricted liabilities of their owners. Hernández-Cánovas & Koëter-Kant (2011) worked upon the cross-country determinants of bank loan maturity for SMEs financing in Europe. It was found that SMEs in countries with good regulatory environment obtain long term debt from the banks. Further, it was found that banks trust on institutional environment to determined loan maturity for micro-firms in contrast to medium sized firms. Further, Csikósová et al. (2016) evaluated the quantitative indicators of marketing activities with reference to the banking sector. Adopting from the existing literature the index used include market share based on number of performances and number of sales; annual growth, relative price, and client's profitability.

Kaur (2015) explored the bank selection criteria of Indian exporting SMEs. Through exploratory factor analysis. Five factors were identified which are financial issues, personnel attributes, bank features, timeliness in services and accommodation of credit needs. The last two factors were considered a critical factor determining bank selection by SMEs. Further, SMEs were classified as transaction-oriented SMEs and relationship-oriented SMEs. Transaction oriented firms focus on good quality services at a low cost. While relationship-oriented SMEs focus on features of banks and accommodation of credit needs. Dhamija & Arora (2017) highlighted the importance of IPO's for SMEs in the Indian context. They focused their study on the initial and after market performance of IPOs in India for SMEs. IPOs were found to be under-priced. The factors responsible for under-pricing include the type of offer, promoter holding, size of issue, extent of oversubscription, lead manager prestige and the stock exchange of listing. In the Bangladeshi context, Hasan (2016) attempted to surface the engagement of manufacturing Bangladeshi SMEs with socially responsible practices.

The study identified the barriers that block the sustainable engagement of SMEs, which includes weak regulatory environment, corruption, inefficient government, less external support, and lack of awareness about the environmental aspect. Moreover, it was found that SMEs adopt socially responsible practices based on the owner's personal motives while other issues such as the environment are often neglected. In addition, it was found that the type of business and size, owner's education level had no significant effect on SMEs adoption of socially responsible practices. Another study by Islam (2009) explored the factors initiating the start-up in Bangladesh. Motivating factors include earning for family, to get relief from unemployment, self-employment, continuing family traditions, previous experience of the same work and low education level. Constraints faced by Bangladeshi SMEs identified are the shortage of finance in terms of fixed and working capital, lack of collateral institutional support, lack of training and lack of business skills; and unavailability of experienced employees.

Osiyevskyy et al. (2016) measured the influence of business planning comprehensiveness on SMEs' performance in terms of operational performance, financial performance, and subjective performance. It was discovered that business planning was positively associated with operational performance in terms of employee productivity, alignment of marketing/sales generating enough prospects. Further subjective performance was also positively associated with the business planning process. The subjective performance was defined by the owners' psychological satisfaction to own and control a business and having the time to spend on vacations. No positive association of business planning was determined with financial performance. The study sample constituted the owner of Canadian and US-owned SMEs. In the South Korean context, Liang et al. (2017) found that lending to SME's decreases banks' cost efficiency due to information asymmetry. However, cost efficiency can be improved by increasing the credit guarantee in proportion. Further, they concluded that the country's credit guarantee system can improve bank efficiency by sharing credit lending risk to SMEs.

In a neighbouring country of Bangladesh, Bala & Feng (2019), identified the success factors for SMEs in Myanmar. TOE framework was used. SMEs success is defined by sales, profit, growth intent and bidding success. TOE framework represents technological, organization and environmental factors. Technological factors were defined in terms of web presence and internet use. Both variables were found to be positively associated with SME success. Organization factors included firm size, firm age and gender of the owner. Firm size was positively associated with SME success, while rest of the two variables showed no positive association.

Environmental factors include market spread, region and industry. Market spread had no association with the success of SME. While the other two variables had a partial association with the SME success. Region represented Yangon region; whether SME in Yangon or in other region. The industry represented manufacturing SME's. Adopting the TOE framework, another research study by Putra & Santoso (2020), presented a structural framework assessing the relationship between TOE components, performance impact and firm's usage of e-business in the Indonesian SMEs context. The organizational context was found as the most significant predictor of e-business usage by the firm followed by technological context and then environmental context.

Usage of e-business by firms had a significant impact on the firm's operational performance rather than managerial and strategic performance. While, operational and strategic level acted as a mediator mediating the indirect impact of e-business usage on firm's strategic performance. The study successfully explored the contextual areas for SMEs where the owners can look and work upon to improve their performance. The study holds a great amount of significance in today's digital age as it has focused on e-business.

WORKING METHODOLOGY:

Research Objectives:

1. To measure the perception of SMEs towards the functional benefits associated from the marketing of financial products.
2. To measure the perception of SMEs towards the perceived risk from the marketing of financial products.

Research study is exploratory in nature as it primarily intends to measure the perception of SME owners and employees towards the marketing of financial products especially bank loans. Primary data has been collected from the SMEs based in Dhaka through judgemental sampling. Judgemental samplings were adopted to suitably judge and identify the target respondents. Seven point Likert scale have been adopted ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Likert scale have also been used in previous studies of similar nature (Al-Alak, 2014; AlBar & Hoque, 2019; Putra and Santoso, 2020), and hence it was adopted for the present study. The questionnaire was distributed to 200 respondents within many SMEs spread throughout Dhaka. From the self-administered 200 questionnaire, 156 responses were used for further analysis; the rest was omitted due to missing or incomplete response.

Dhaka was selected as the premise of the study as it is the capital city of Bangladesh and approximately 40% of SMEs in Bangladesh are situated in Dhaka (Rahman, 2015).

Research instrument was prepared based on the industry expert knowledge and with the help of literature reviewed. A final questionnaire was derived with 22 item statements divided under six heads. Frequency count in terms of percentages denotes the figures utilized in the tables in data analysis section. Analysis was done using SPSS software. Figures used in the tables have been adopted from the SPSS output. Bank loans and credit facilities have been used as financial products in this paper.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Demographic Information

Demographic Information	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male Female	121 35	77.6 22.4
Age	Less than 20 years 20 to less than 25 years 25 to less than 30 years 30 to less than 35 years 35 to less than 40 years 40 years and above	25 29 35 28 26 13	16.1 18.6 22.5 17.9 16.6 8.3
Marital Status	Single Married Divorced Separated	77 70 5 4	49.4 44.8 3.3 2.5

The above table represents the demographic information of the participants, which included higher male percentage (77.6%) than females. Most of the participants were also between the age group of 25-30 years (22.5%) followed by 20 -25 years (17.9%) and 35 to less than 40 years (16.6%), with above 40 years being the lowest one. Majority of the respondents were single (49.4%) while separated status was the lowest (2.5%).

Functional Benefits

Table 1: Functional benefits perceived by SMEs

Functional Benefits	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
F1	5.3	6.3	6.8	13.1	22.3	27.2	18.9
F2	2.9	8.3	14.1	8.3	22.3	32.5	11.7
F3	4.4	6.8	12.6	22.3	24.3	21.8	7.8
F4	4.9	8.7	12.1	18..9	19.4	26.2	9.7
F5	4.4	4.9	10.2	19.9	20.4	28.2	12.1

Above table represents the functional benefits perceived by the respondents. Statement F1 has large number of responses on the scale of agreement as 22.3% of the respondents opted for slightly agree, while 27.2% agreed with the statement. Further 18.9% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. It represents those SMEs owners perceives financial products have right features and attributes. Statement F2 represents the SMEs owners' perception towards companies offering financial products having a good performance. Similar to F1, collectively 66.5% of respondents have provided their response on the scale of agreement for the second item statement. Statement F3 shows that the respondents considered financial products useful for SMEs as 24.3% of the respondents slightly agreed, and 21.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Apart, a small proportion of 7.8% strongly agreed to the point. Further, it was found that respondents believed that financial products have technological innovation (F4). 19.4% of the respondents slightly agreed with the statement followed by 26.2% who agreed with the statement. Additionally, a set of 9.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with statement four. Statement F5 stating that 'financial products sells because they work well' have similar result to the other four statements. 12.1% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, while 28.2% of the respondents agreed and another set of 20.4% of the respondents slightly agreed. It can be inferred that the respondents perceived functional benefits from the financial products offered to SMEs like bank loans and credit.

Experiential Benefits

scale of disagreement. Neutral responses were also received. Statement E4 tells that financial products compete on the basis of providing outstanding experience to the customers. For E4, 11.7% of the respondents have strongly agreed; while, 24.8% also agreed with the statement. Slight agreement was also recorded by 29.6% of respondents. Scale of disagreement and neutral are low in proportion. Thus, it can be stated that people working in SMEs finds financial products competitive based on the experience. To conclude, it is inferred that respondents considers financial products exciting, competitive and attractive. Further, knowledge component has also been identified by the respondents.

Table 2: Experiential benefits perceived by SME

Experiential Benefits	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
E1	6.3	8.3	11.7	14.1	18.4	23.3	18
E2	5.8	5.3	13.6	23.3	23.3	18	10.7
E3	4.4	6.3	11.2	18.9	24.3	25.2	9.7
E4	3.4	5.3	12.1	13.1	29.6	24.8	11.7

Table 2 deals with the experiential benefits of the financial products offered to SMEs. First statement E1 states that financial products are interesting and exciting. 18% of the respondents have strongly agreed to this point. 23.3% respondents have agreed while 18.4% of the respondents have slightly agreed with the statement. Cumulatively, 52% of the respondents have marked their responses on the scale of the agreement for E2. While 23.3% of the respondents have opted their response as neutral. Low proportion responses have also been received on the scale of disagreement. E2 explains the knowledge provided by the banks about financial products. Statement E3 tells about the attractiveness of the financial products for SMEs. The majority of the responses have been obtained on the scale of agreement. 9.7% of the respondents have strongly agreed with the statement, while 25.2% of respondents have shown their agreement. 24.3% of respondents have slight agreement with the statement. In less proportion responses have also been recorded on the

Symbolic Benefits

Table 3: Symbolic benefits perceived by SMEs

Symbolic Benefits	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Slightly Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Slightly Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
S1	3.9	4.9	11.2	23.8	26.2	21.4	8.7
S2	3.4	4.4	12.1	27.7	23.8	18.9	9.7
S3	2.9	6.3	10.2	21.4	27.2	20.9	11.2
S4	2.4	6.3	12.6	18.4	31.1	19.4	9.7

Above table highlights the perception of people associated with SMEs towards symbolic benefits of the financial product especially credit access. Statement 1 results shows that 8.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with the point that financial product have their own brand association. Further another set of 21.4% of the respondents agreed followed by 26.2%, who slightly agreed with the statement. Statement 2 expresses the client's ability to express their attitude while buying financial products. Statement explains the customization offered to SMEs by the banks while granting credit. S2 shows low response on the scale of disagreement, while a notable population of the respondents have marked their responses as neutral for all the statements. Though, an adequate number of responses have been received on the scale of agreement to derive the results. Third statement reflects the respondent's consideration of financial products as prestigious and reflective of status. Table 3 shows that 27.2% of the respondents have slightly agreed with the statement, followed by 20.9% of the respondents who have also agreed to the statement. While, a small proportion of 11.2% respondents strongly agreed to the statement. S4 explains the respondent's perception about the organizations offering financial products as socially responsible. Cumulatively, 60.2% of the responses have been recorded on the scale of agreement.

Perceived Risks

Table 4: Perceived Risks by SMEs

Perceived Costs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
RI1	1.9	5.8	11.7	26.7	27.2	19.9	6.8
RI2	3.4	2.4	12.6	23.8	26.2	18.4	13.1
RI3	3.9	6.8	18.4	26.7	16.5	19.4	7.8

Table 4 shows the respondents' opinion towards the perceived risks associated with the financial products. First statement represents that disclosure of terms and condition reduces the perceived risk associated with financial products. 26.7% of the responses have been received as neutral. 27.2% of the respondents slightly agreed with the statement, followed by 19.9% of the respondent who also agreed with the statement. Further a small proportion of 6.8% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Second statement represents that flexible return policy reduces perceived risk significantly. Cumulatively 18.4% of the responses have been received on the scale of disagreement, while 57.7% of the respondents agreed to the statement. However 23.8% neutral responses were also recorded. Third statement RI3, represents the perception of respondents that financial products are often projected as a good deal when they are marketed. It received low response on the disagreement scale, while 26.7% of the responses were marked as neutral. On other aspect, 16.5% of respondents slightly agreed with the statement, while 19.4% agreed and 7.8% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. In a nutshell, it can be said that along with the benefits, SMEs are also careful about the risks associated with financial products.

Reciprocity in Relationship

Table 5: Reciprocity in Relationship

Reciprocity	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
R1	5.3	13.1	15	25.7	18.4	15	7.3
R2	1.9	6.3	9.2	21.4	28.2	21.8	11.2
R3	1.9	3.4	9.7	20.9	26.2	23.3	14.1

Table 5 represent the reciprocity in the relationship between financial product providing organization and the SMEs. First statement R1 describes the respondent's perception to receive the expected response from the organizations when they share their information. Around 25% of the responses have been recorded as neutral for this statement, while 33.4% of the responses show disagreement in total. This looks strange that respondents don't expect anything from the organization while sharing the information. This needs future research consideration. Though, responses were also recorded on the scale of agreement as 7.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, while 15% also agreed and slight agreement was also obtained from the 18.4% respondents. Second statement R2 represents respondents believe that provider will answer their queries also when they share their information with the organizations. The statement received majority of the responses on the scale of agreement as 11.2% of respondents strongly agreed; 21.8% agreed and 28.2% slightly agreed with the statement. Responses received for the statement on the scale of disagreement are very less. Third statement represents respondents believe that they will receive every other necessary information of the product while sharing information with the provider of financial service provider. A large set of respondents have an agreement to this statement as 26.2% of the respondents have slightly agreed, 23.3% agreed and 14.1% of the respondents have strongly agreed with the statement. Overall, it can be inferred that people engaged in SMEs have reciprocity expectations from the organization providing financial products while sharing information.

Reputation of SMEs

Table 6: Reputation of SMEs by sharing information

Reputation	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
RE1	4.4	6.3	9.2	14.6	26.7	24.8	14.1
RE2	5.3	7.3	10.7	14.1	30.1	22.8	9.7
RE3	4.4	6.3	9.7	15	28.6	27.7	8.3

Statement 1, RE1 depicts that people engaged with SMEs feels that information sharing with the organization improves their image. Numbers are low for the disagreement scale as well for neutral point. However, a notable response of 26.7% have been received as slightly agree. While, 24.8% of the respondents have agreed and another set of 14.1% of the respondents have strongly agreed with the statement. RE2 represents the perception that people who share information with the organizations (financial products providers), have better reputation. Cumulative response on the scale of disagreement counts to 23.3%. 14.1% of the respondents have marked their responses as neutral. While, 30.1% of the respondents have slightly agreed with the statement. Another set of respondents 22.8% have agreed; while, 9.7% of the respondents have strongly agreed with the statement. Statement 3, states that 'my reputation improves in front of others when I share information with the organization'. 28.6% of the respondents have slightly agreed with the statement; while, 27.7% of the respondents have agreed with the statement. A small proportion of 8.3% have strongly agreed with the statement. It can be inferred that SMEs in Bangladesh prefer to share information with the banks and consider information sharing as a reputation building factor. Thus, reducing information asymmetry and increasing the credit access.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION:

The paper addressed the perceived benefits of financial products offered to SMEs using several factors including functional benefits, experiential benefits, symbolic benefits, perceived risks, reciprocity in relationship and reputation of SMEs.

Accordingly, the results indicated respondents perceived functional benefits from the financial products offered to SMEs (i.e., bank loans and credit) were high. Moreover, the results indicated people working in SMEs finds financial products competitive based on experience. Therefore, respondents considered financial products exciting, competitive and attractive. Additionally, respondents' perception about the organizations offering financial products as socially responsible was also measured as a symbolic benefit.

For the perceived risk factor, the results indicated that along with the benefits, SMEs are also careful about the risks associated with financial products. While people engaged in SMEs have reciprocity expectations from the organization providing financial products. Lastly, the results of the survey inferred that SMEs in Bangladesh prefer to share information with the banks and consider information sharing as a reputation building factor; thus, reducing information asymmetry and increasing credit access.

These results of the study indicate that the above factors are significant in determining the financial products offered to SMEs. Further studies can highlight their importance by integrating personal value, perception, and attitudes towards financial products offered to SMEs. This additional factor may contribute to broaden the view of the different viewpoints of the benefits of financial products towards SMEs, especially in the context of developing countries such as Bangladesh.

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