

Barriers to Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs in Bangladesh: Insights from TallyKhata

Internship Organization:
TallyKhata

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Business Administration



Date (14th December, 2025)

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Letter of Transmittal

Date: 14/12/2025

To

Asif Uddin Ahmed
Assistant Professor
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Subject: Submission of Internship Report

Dear Sir,

I present my internship report entitled Barriers to Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs in Bangladesh: Insights from TallyKhata as a partial submission to the completion of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program in the Department of Business Administration of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB).

I have used this report as a basis to my internship experience in TallyKhata, where I was serviced by the Growth, Marketing, and Activation departments. In the study, there is the integration of a practical internship learning with an academic research element that examines the obstacles, motivators and patterns of utilising digital business management and payment tools by small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh.

The process of preparing this report has helped me to engage my academic knowledge to real-life business challenges, as well as acquire some valuable insights into the realm of fintech, digital financial inclusion, and how small businesses behave. I also hope that the report will be of the expected academic standards and that it will be able to show my learning outcomes.

I want to thank you for providing your advice, motivation, and feedback during this process. I am pleased to explain any section of the report where necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Fardin Haque
ID: 221011018
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Acknowledgement

I would like to state that I really want to thank everyone who supported me and helped me to complete my internship report in a successful way.

To begin with, I would like to express my gratitude to my academic supervisor who provided me with good advice, constructive feedback and endless support that facilitated how I would develop this report in an organized and meaningful way. Their observations helped in making this study more academic and practical.

I would also wish to express my sincere gratitude to TallyKhata (Progoti Systems Limited) to grant me such an opportunity to complete my internship in such a dynamic and learning oriented environment. I would like to particularly thank the Growth, Marketing, and Activation teams, the collaboration with whom, their mentoring, and readiness to share knowledge helped me to make the most of my internship experience.

I want to express my great gratitude to all small entrepreneurs who responded to the survey and participated in the interview. The research was made possible and meaningful as a result of their time, honesty and willingness to share their experiences.

I also owe my friends and fellow classmates to encourage and have discussions about this experience and provide me with moral support. Finally, I would like to also mention that my family was ever-motivating and believed in me, which made me stay focused and committed till the very end.

It is not only the accomplishment of one of my academic needs but also the achievement of one of the key milestones in my university life, and I would indeed appreciate all those who helped me to do so.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
MFS	Mobile Financial Services
QR	Quick Response
PSP	Payment Service Provider
KYC	Know Your Customer
NID	National Identification Card
POS	Point of Sale
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
EV	Electric Vehicle
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ULAB	University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh
PSL	Progoti Systems Limited

Contents

Chapter 1: Internship Preparation.....	1
1.1 Why I want to do this internship and what I hope to achieve by doing it	1
1.2 Internship search process	1
1.3 Internship interview experience	1
1.4 What does your internship organization do?	2
Chapter 2: About the Internship.....	3
2.1 Job Position and Responsibilities	3
2.2 Your Takeaway from this position	5
2.3 Apply your skills to what you are doing in your internship	5
Chapter 3: Self-Reflection.....	6
3.1 Feedback on Internship.....	6
3.2 Where can I improve, and where could the Organization use me more?	7
3.3 Recommendation.....	7
Chapter 4: Personal Development Plan.....	8
4.1 Personal Development Goals.....	8
4.1.1 Short-Term Goals (1-2 years):	8
4.1.2 Long-Term Goals (3-5 years):.....	9
4.2 Skills I Am Interested to Learn in the Future	9
4.2.1 Technical Abilities:.....	9
4.2.2 Soft Skills:	9
4.3 Policy for Skill Creation and Action Plan	9
Executive Summary	10
Chapter 1: Introduction	11
1.1 Background of the Study	11
1.2 Research Questions and Objectives	12
1.3 Scope of the Research.....	13
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	13
2.1 Global and Bangladesh Context of Digital Financial Inclusion	13
2.2 Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs and Small Traders	14
2.3 Barriers to Digital Adoption Among Small Businesses	14
2.4 Marketing Digital Financial Products to SMEs.....	15
2.5 Synthesis and Research Gap	15
Chapter 3: Methodology	17

3.1 Research Design.....	17
3.2 Participant Selection.....	17
3.3 Data Collection Tools	18
3.4 Data Analysis Plan.....	19
Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis from Quantitative Analysis.....	19
4.1 Introduction.....	19
4.2 Profile of the Respondents.....	20
4.3 Awareness of Digital Payment Systems	20
4.4 Ease of Use and Technology Difficulty	21
4.5 Cost and Pricing Issues.....	22
4.6 Customer Payment Behavior	22
4.7 Technical Support and Continued Usage	23
4.8 Summary of Key Results.....	24
Chapter 5: Discussion on Qualitative Study	25
5.1 Qualitative Findings and Interpretation.....	25
5.1.1 Business Context and Daily Practices	25
5.1.2 Awareness and Perceived Benefits of Digital Apps.....	25
5.1.3 Technology Experience and Barriers to Adoption	26
5.1.4 Support Needs, Language, and Feature Preferences	26
5.1.5 Social Influence and Adoption Decisions.....	26
5.1.6 Overall Contribution of the Qualitative Findings	27
Chapter 6: Summary Discussion and Recommendations.....	28
6.1 Introduction.....	28
6.2 Summary Discussion of Key Findings.....	28
6.2.1 Awareness Exists, but Understanding Is Limited.....	28
6.2.2 Ease of Use and Technology Fear Are Major Barriers	28
6.2.3 Cost Sensitivity Influences Adoption Decisions	28
6.2.4 Customer Behavior Strongly Affects Merchant Adoption	29
6.2.5 Importance of Technical Support and Language	29
6.3 Overall Interpretation.....	29
6.4 Recommendations.....	30
6.4.1 Improve Training and Onboarding.....	30
6.4.2 Strengthen Bangla Language Support	30
6.4.3 Keep Costs Low and Transparent.....	30

6.4.4 Encourage Customer–Merchant Ecosystems	30
6.4.5 Improve Technical Support Systems	31
6.5 Conclusion	31
References:	32
Appendix:	34
Quantitative Questionnaire	34
Section A: Demographic and Business Information.....	34
Section B: Digital Tools and Financial Services.....	35
Section C: Digital Skills and Comfort.....	36
Section D: Perceptions, Barriers, and Needs (Likert-Scale).....	36
Section E: App Features and Preferences.....	36
Section F: Communication and Support.....	37
Section G: Adoption and Advocacy.....	37
Qualitative Questionnaire	39
Section A: Business Context & Daily Practices.....	39
Section B: Awareness and Attitudes Toward Digital Apps.....	39
Section C: Experience with Technology & Barriers.....	39
Section D: Needs & Preferences.....	39
Section E: Social Influence & Adoption Drivers	39
Section F: Closing & Additional Insights	39
Copy of company-provided internship confirmation/acceptance letter (attached)	40
INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL FORM	41
Turnitin Report	42

Chapter 1: Internship Preparation

1.1 Why I want to do this internship and what I hope to achieve by doing it

As a BBA student concentrating in marketing at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), I have always felt the need to bridge the gap between classroom concepts and real industry practice before stepping into the professional world. I have a strong interest in understanding how well-known companies operate from the inside, what drives their strategies, how they present themselves to the public, and how they build the connections that make us relate to their brands. It's more than just visibility or recognition; it's the sense of connection a brand creates that truly stays with people.

Today, almost every aspect of our lives has moved into the digital space, from studying and working to shopping, researching, and even managing our finances. Among the industries leading this transformation, fintech has completely reshaped how we save, transact, and access financial services. While the world is moving fast toward cashless systems, Bangladesh still has a long way to go. I have always felt that this sector needs more innovation and expansion, and I wanted to contribute to that change. My internship at TallyKhata became the perfect opportunity to be part of this growing digital financial revolution.

1.2 Internship search process

While searching for an internship, I explored platforms like BDjobs, NRBjobs, and a few others, but most of the openings there were full-time roles. Eventually, I found that Facebook groups such as “*Internship Opportunities in Bangladesh*” and “*Internship in Bangladesh*” were much more helpful. These groups have active communities where companies often post internship vacancies, and the environment feels more dynamic and student-friendly.

One day, while scrolling through one of these groups, I came across a posting from TallyKhata for an intern position in their Growth and Marketing team. The name immediately caught my attention. When I looked into it, I realized that TallyKhata is a fintech company, exactly the kind of industry I had been hoping to join for a long time. I had attended interviews with a few other companies earlier, but they were not the right fit in terms of location, role, or work culture. This opportunity felt different. Without thinking twice, I sent them my CV, and within three business days, I received a call inviting me for an interview scheduled on September 9th.

1.3 Internship interview experience

On the day of the interview, I booked an Uber to TallyKhata's office at Banani 23/A so I wouldn't exhaust myself using public transport. The interview was scheduled for 10 a.m., and I reached a few minutes early. Right from the moment I stepped inside, I liked the overall vibe of the office. It was modern, clean, and had an open floor layout that encouraged teamwork and communication. While waiting, the other candidates and I casually talked about our university experiences. We were also offered coffee, something no other office had ever done for me before—and it genuinely made me feel welcomed and valued.

We were soon invited into the conference room for the interview with none other than the Head of Growth and Marketing himself. He carried an approachable, friendly presence that eased the room. He began by asking me about myself, and I briefly walked him through my schooling, college life, and a few non-academic activities like sports, basic things that he could already see from my CV. Instead of repeating that, I focused on sharing the practical experiences I gained from marketing clubs, event management, and competitions, which had helped me develop teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.

He then asked where I saw myself in five years. I told him that I hoped to work as a unit head in the marketing field, managing a team and contributing to strategic decision-making. After that, he asked me to name two sectors I would like to work in. I confidently placed fintech at the top because I genuinely want to be part of the shift toward digital financial usage in Bangladesh. My second choice was the automobile industry, a passion rooted in my childhood, when I spent hours playing car games like *Need for Speed*.

Then came a practical and quite challenging question: if he were to buy a car in Bangladesh, should he choose an octane-run car, a hybrid, or an EV? I took a moment to think and recommended a hybrid. I explained that although awareness about environmental sustainability is growing, Bangladesh is still not fully ready for EV adoption in terms of infrastructure and general readiness. Hybrids offer the perfect balance because they run on both fuel and electricity, making them cost-effective and more suitable for our current road and energy conditions. He seemed satisfied with my reasoning.

At the end of the interview, he gave me a task: prepare a PowerPoint presentation on TallyKhata and present it the next morning. That night, I spent hours researching the company in detail and creating a structured, well-prepared presentation. A few days later, on September 14th, I received the call confirming that I had been selected. I was officially set to start on September 15th.

1.4 What does your internship organization do?



TallyKhata is one of the leading fintech platforms in Bangladesh, transforming the way small businesses manage their accounting and digital payment activities. The platform was launched in 2020 as a digital alternative to traditional physical ledger books. Its name comes from the Bengali word “tallykhata,” commonly used by local grocery shops and small business owners to record daily transactions.

TallyKhata is a product of Progoti Systems Limited (PSL), founded by Dr. Shahadat Khan, the CEO, who brings over 31 years of experience in technology and innovation. The company has attracted major international investment, including funding from the SBI Group and Standard Chartered Bank Ventures across Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Canada.

With over 5.5 million registered businesses and more than one million transactions per day, the TallyKhata app has become Bangladesh’s No. 1 digital platform for small business management. The company also operates TallyPay, a digital wallet licensed as a Payment Service Provider (PSP) by Bangladesh Bank.

TallyKhata's flagship products include its Bangla digital bookkeeping system, the TallyPay digital wallet, the Super QR payment system, capable of accepting payments from 34 banks and mobile financial services through a single QR code, SMS-based credit collection reminders, and working capital loans offered in partnership with financial institutions.

The company's mission is to support small businesses by providing accessible digital solutions for financial management and payments. Their long-term vision aligns with the national goal of building a Smart Bangladesh by 2041, ensuring that small business owners across the country have access to modern, efficient, and reliable financial technology.

Chapter 2: About the Internship

2.1 Job Position and Responsibilities

I was placed as an intern in the Growth and Marketing team, and from the very first day, they made me feel genuinely welcome. I was included in important meetings, observed how professionals approach strategy, and slowly began to understand the thought processes behind their decisions. On my first day, my supervisor gave me a detailed introduction to TallyKhata, helping me build a complete 360-degree understanding of the product.

On the second day, I was given my first task: to write a 1,000-word essay on TallyKhata based on everything I had learned on day one. After completing that, I moved on to competitor analysis. The company's main focus at that time was Super QR, a product designed to allow customers to pay from any medium through a single QR code. My job was to research cash-out fees of different mobile financial services and banks, along with identifying which institutions were offering Bangla QR. TallyKhata charged 11.50 taka per 1,000 taka, but finding similar information for competitors was challenging. Most details were not available online, so I had to call multiple customer care hotlines to gather accurate and updated information.

Once the analysis was complete, I was assigned a solo field visit to Uttara to understand Super QR adoption among small businesses. I spent around two and a half hours in the field, from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., speaking to roughly two dozen shops. Out of them, 11 showed genuine interest. Since it was my first field visit alone, I was nervous at the beginning, but eventually I overcame that feeling and used it to motivate myself. With every “no,” I learned something new, and with every “yes,” I felt my confidence grow stronger.

Later, our team was asked to revive the company's inactive LinkedIn pages. To support this, I researched competitors such as Sheba Manager and Hishabee to understand their content strategy, posting frequency, engagement style, and user interaction patterns. Based on my findings, I developed and proposed a content strategy recommendation for TallyKhata, covering content themes, posting timelines, copywriting samples, and hashtag strategies.

After completing my initial responsibilities, I shifted to the Activation team, where I am currently working. Since TallyKhata is an authorized fintech platform, every user must complete proper KYC verification by submitting their NID and a live selfie. My role involves checking these selfies to ensure they match the NID photos and meet the clarity and quality required for accurate identification.

The work becomes even more engaging when customers apply for Super QR. To complete the registration, they must provide several details, including the type of shop they run, their role in the business, a clear exterior photo of the shop, and a second photo that verifies their presence inside the shop. However, many small business owners are not very tech-savvy, which often leads to rejected applications. Whenever this happens, I call them personally to explain the issue. I reassure them, guide them patiently through the correct process, and encourage them to resubmit the

application with proper documents. This part of my role requires empathy, patience, and strong communication skills.

Recently, I have also been contributing blog content for the company's website. While researching the digital presence of fintech leaders such as bKash, I noticed that their services tab clearly outlines every feature they offer, which helps customers understand the platform instantly. This is an area where TallyKhata still has room to grow. To support this, I have been writing informative and engaging blogs that explain TallyKhata's services in simple terms, address common user concerns, such as those related to TallyPay or Super QR, and highlight the benefits of each feature. My goal is to educate users, reduce their hesitation, and present TallyKhata's offerings in a relatable and compelling way.

2.2 Your Takeaway from this position

My internship gave me a truly valuable hands-on marketing experience. I had the opportunity to work on competitor research, field marketing, content strategy, and direct customer engagement, all of which helped me understand how marketing functions in a real-world business environment. Through this journey, I gained meaningful insight into the fintech ecosystem, including the regulatory landscape, competitive dynamics, and adoption patterns within Bangladesh's local market.

Working closely with business owners from different backgrounds taught me the importance of customer empathy and communication. Each conversation required a different approach, and this helped me adapt my speaking style based on the customer's personality and level of awareness. My field marketing experience in Uttara, although challenging at first, became one of the most rewarding parts of my internship. Facing repeated rejection taught me resilience and reinforced an essential lesson in sales and marketing: persistence is key.

My tasks involving competitor analysis and LinkedIn research strengthened my analytical and research skills, allowing me to make structured observations and meaningful recommendations. On the other hand, writing blogs for the official website significantly developed my content creation and copywriting abilities. I learned how to write with purpose, communicate clearly, and use compelling calls to action that guide readers toward understanding and adopting a service.

Above all, this internship helped me build strong professional habits. I became more punctual, focused, proactive, and solution-oriented, qualities that I believe will guide me throughout my career. This experience not only enriched my understanding of marketing but also shaped me personally and professionally.

2.3 Apply your skills to what you are doing in your internship

My Bachelor of Business Administration program has given me a strong theoretical foundation, and I was able to apply many of these concepts directly during my internship. Courses on the 4Ps helped me understand why TallyKhata's pricing strategy plays such an important role in its competitive advantage. My studies on consumer behaviour and targeting techniques also helped me communicate more effectively during field visits, especially when speaking with different types of business owners.

The theoretical framework for my internship work came from my courses on digital marketing and physical marketing. These subjects helped me analyze TallyKhata's LinkedIn activity, understand content variations, and think about how to optimize communication for different platforms. My marketing research methods courses were especially useful, as they taught me how to collect data systematically, verify information, and analyze findings, all of which were essential when I conducted competitor analysis and examined the market landscape.

My business communication training also played a major role in shaping my approach. The lessons on influence and empathy were extremely helpful when I had to speak to customers whose applications were rejected. I learned how to communicate honestly yet gently, guide them step-by-step, and maintain a positive relationship. My CRM-related coursework came alive in these moments, reminding me how crucial it is to build trust and satisfaction with customers. Working in the Activation team allowed me to apply this every single day.

Additionally, everything I learned in my Content Marketing Principles course, structuring articles, writing with SEO in mind, storytelling, and using strong calls to action, became directly relevant when I was assigned to write blogs for TallyKhata's website. These tasks helped me connect my academic understanding with real strategic objectives. Overall, the business fundamentals I was taught gave me a clearer sense of how my role contributes to TallyKhata's growth goals and competitive position in the market.

Chapter 3: Self-Reflection

3.1 Feedback on Internship

Looking back on my journey as an intern at TallyKhata, I genuinely feel fortunate to have been part of work where I could see real, tangible outcomes. The variety of tasks, from market research and field marketing to digital strategy and content creation, gave me a well-rounded learning experience that went far beyond what I had expected.

The company culture was truly inspiring. The environment encouraged curiosity, teamwork, and open communication. Everyone was supportive and willing to share their knowledge whenever I needed guidance. Being included in important meetings from the very beginning also made me feel valued and helped me understand how decisions are made at a strategic level.

Of course, the journey came with its own challenges. The fast-paced nature of a startup demanded adaptability and quick thinking. Managing tasks across different teams sometimes felt like handling two jobs at once, requiring strong time management and focus. I also had to overcome a steep learning curve, especially when understanding fintech regulations and technical processes, which required a lot of independent learning.

My fieldwork experience in Uttara pushed me far out of my comfort zone. Approaching strangers alone, facing repeated rejection, and still staying motivated was difficult—but it taught me resilience and reminded me that rejection is not personal. My role in the Activation team also required patience, empathy, and cultural awareness, especially when guiding customers through technical requirements over phone calls.

Overall, this internship taught me an important lesson: never assume, never hesitate to ask questions, and never hold back ideas out of shyness. In a professional environment, speaking up, seeking clarity, and sharing insights are essential for growth and success.

3.2 Where can I improve, and where could the Organization use me more?

I believe I could have managed my time more effectively with better upfront planning and by breaking projects into clear milestones. Improved communication, such as asking questions early and sharing progress proactively, would have reduced wasted time. Taking a more proactive approach, by bringing opportunities and solutions instead of only executing tasks, could have added greater value.

The company could have benefited from a formal mentorship program, where interns are paired with senior staff as a team rather than reporting to just one supervisor. Such a program, with clearly defined expectations and milestones from the start, would have guided learning more effectively. Planned cross-functional rotations between departments, such as Product Development and Operations, could have provided a more complete understanding of fintech processes.

Introducing regular workshops on fintech fundamentals, digital marketing strategies, and data analysis would have enhanced skill development. This could also have created opportunities to participate in strategic planning meetings, offering fresh perspectives and valuable learning experiences. Additionally, structured monthly feedback sessions would have allowed for more explicit tracking of progress and areas for improvement.

3.3 Recommendation

To improve the internship experience, I would suggest creating a structured onboarding program that includes company orientation, product training, and introductions to key stakeholders. Less formal guidance from junior staff could also be encouraged if they actively engaged with interns and shared their experiences.

Another idea would be to hold weekly learning sessions where team members present on their areas of expertise. Initiating joint projects across teams for interns would promote collaboration and cross-functional learning. Supporting interns in building portfolios with tangible work would also help advance their future careers.

Finally, conducting formal exit interviews with departing interns would capture valuable feedback for improving the program and maintain connections that could benefit both the interns and the company in the long term.

Chapter 4: Personal Development Plan

4.1 Personal Development Goals

4.1.1 Short-Term Goals (1-2 years):

I aim to master digital marketing tools such as Google Analytics, Google Ads, and SEMrush for SEO analysis, as well as social media management platforms, through certification programs. Learning to analyze data using advanced Excel, Google Data Studio, and potentially SQL will allow me to contribute more effectively to data-driven marketing efforts.

I also plan to enhance my ability to create content for blog posts, social media, video scripts, and email campaigns, while strengthening my understanding of SEO fundamentals. Gaining deeper insights into the fintech industry through reading publications, attending webinars, and understanding the regulatory landscape will further make me a competitive candidate.

Additionally, improving my writing and communication skills, as well as preparing and delivering persuasive presentations, is essential. Maintaining a professional presence online, particularly on LinkedIn, and sharing work as a portfolio will help me secure better career opportunities.

4.1.2 Long-Term Goals (3-5 years):

My ideal workplace would be as a Marketing Manager in a finance or technology company. I aim to be a key contributor in teams, driving business success through innovative marketing strategies. My goals are focused on growth and digital marketing, becoming a specialist in acquiring and retaining users at scale, and optimizing marketing efforts for maximum impact.

Gaining training and exposure to leadership and team management roles will prepare me for senior positions. Engaging in speaking, writing, or mentoring within the industry will help me establish myself as a proactive thought leader. I am considering pursuing an MBA or a specialized master's degree after gaining 2–3 years of professional experience. My goal is to build a strong career foundation, achieve stability in my career, and then further strengthen my expertise through advanced education.

4.2 Skills I Am Interested to Learn in the Future

4.2.1 Technical Abilities:

Proficient in data analysis and visualization using tools such as Python or Tableau. Experienced with marketing automation platforms like HubSpot and Marketo, and well-versed in SEO and SEM strategies. Skilled in CRM systems, including Salesforce, with additional capabilities in video production and editing. Knowledgeable in web analytics and conversion rate optimization to drive data-informed marketing decisions.

4.2.2 Soft Skills:

Possess essential human skills for business, including emotional intelligence for effective leadership and teamwork. Capable of providing strategic guidance to support long-term business goals. Skilled in negotiation and persuasion as communication tools within the global economy. Culturally aware, with the ability to lead in a globalized work environment. Familiar with formal project management practices

beyond informal learning. Strong critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, as well as resilience through understanding stress and applying techniques to manage it effectively.

4.3 Policy for Skill Creation and Action Plan

I plan to take online courses through platforms such as Coursera and LinkedIn Learning, dedicating 5–6 hours per week to structured learning. Applying this knowledge through freelance work, volunteering, or personal projects will enhance my self-development and help me build a strong portfolio.

I am committed to reading one marketing book per month and staying active with industry blogs to remain updated on trends and best practices. Additionally, I look forward to seeking mentorship and actively growing my professional network through events, professional organizations, and LinkedIn connections.

PART-B

Executive Summary

In this study, the I aim to describe how I applied the academic knowledge in the form of practical learning as an intern in TallyKhata (Progoti Systems Limited), one of the top fintech platforms serving small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. This paper will explore the use of digital bookkeeping and payments systems, and in particular the Super QR system of petty traders, grocery shop owners and teastall owners.

The internship, which was done in the middle of a promotional campaign, provided first-hand experience with the Growth, Marketing, and Activation teams. The tasks were merchant onboarding support, KYC verification, communication with the rejected applicant, promotion of Super QR on the field, competition analysis, and content development. The contacts with merchants in urban, peri-urban and semi-urban regions provided a sense of practical concerning adoption behaviour.

The results indicate that despite the high prevalence of smartphone ownership and simple awareness of the mobile financial services, the adoption of digital payments is detracted by transaction fee issues, customer preference of cash, insufficient awareness of the benefits, usability issues, and trust concerns. Nevertheless, the paper also notes a high potential of greater adoption with simplified onboarding, training to be local, understanding the value, and understanding the merchants.

The internship facilitated the practical application of the BBA coursework, in such areas as marketing strategy, consumer behavior, segmentation, business communication and content marketing. These were implemented in field marketing, customer persuasion, research and digital communication that enhanced analytical, inter-personal, and strategic skills.

Regardless of financial technological regulations, rapid processes, and merchant rejection, the experience has benefited a great deal in terms of professional confidence, flexibility, and problem-solving skills. All in all, the study supports the assertion that learning in a fintech setting, grounded in experience, connects the gap between theory and practice and brings useful insights into the topic of digital financial inclusion by small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Bangladesh is in a significant phase of digital innovation. Small entrepreneurs like petty traders, tea-stall owners, and grocery shop owners are crucial in daily commerce since the nation has over one hundred and seventy million people and almost twelve million small businesses that contribute a lot to the national economy (Hasan, 2025). Despite the growth of digital financial services in the country, cash remains predominant and it is estimated that over seventy percent of the transactions are made in cash as of December 2024. Such extensive cash expenditure is detailing the development of the country towards the Smart Bangladesh 2041 vision (Saad, 2025).

Mobile financial solutions like bKash, Nagad and Rocket have revolutionized the person to person transfer, yet merchants have not adopted digital payments. A number of small entrepreneurs use digital tools but still continue using cash because of habit and familiarity as well as customer preferences. This brings about inefficiencies, heightens risks associated with handling of cash and limits access of business to formal credit as record of transactions is informal.

In 2020, Progoti Systems Limited launched TallyKhata, which would assist such entrepreneurs by providing a paperless digitalized version of the traditional ledger. Millions of small businesses around the nation embraced it within a short period of time. With Super QR introduced later, enabling merchants to accept payments offered by 34 banks and mobile financial service providers, TallyKhata became a platform that combines bookkeeping, order reception and prospects of digital credit evaluation (Thakur, 2024).

As an intern at TallyKhata, I was in close contact with the entrepreneurs in the industry and was able to observe the actual problems that hindered their use of digital payment tools. Others found the registration process challenging, others had anxiety about charges, most of them favored the use of cash as their customers were more comfortable with the cash system, and there were those who had difficulties adapting to the technology. These observations informed the topic of this study. The proposed study will focus on exploring the obstacles and facilitators of the adoption and successful use of the TallyKhata app by small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh and finding viable solutions through which its adoption can be increased and the business management requirements of petty traders, tea stall owners, and grocery shop owners can be met.

1.2 Research Questions and Objectives

The key research question of the given work is to learn what aspects make small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh use or not adopt the digital payment systems based on the Super QR offered by TallyKhata and its associated digital services.

The questionnaire will address the following questions:

- How do the small business owners understand and have awareness of the benefits of digital payment?

- What is the effect of the perceptions of ease of use and technological difficulty on adoption?
- What is the impact of costs and pricing issues on merchant decisions?
- How does the customer payment behaviour affect the acceptance of merchants?
- What is the impact of availability of technical support and quality of such support on continued usage?
- What demographic and business attributes are related to various levels of adoption?

The purpose of the research is to examine the hindrances and motivators influencing the uptake and successful use of the TallyKhata app by small enterprises in Bangladesh and to determine actionable research that will enhance its uptake and benefit the particular business management requirements of petty traders, tea-stall owners, and grocery shop owners. The chosen questions that need to be addressed by the study are to comprehend the usefulness of digital tools perceived by entrepreneurs, what the onboarding and use process are like, and what motivates them to continue using them.

1.3 Scope of the Research

This paper concentrates on small business owners including petty traders, tea-stalls owners and grocery shop owners in urban, semi urban and rural parts of Bangladesh. The contact number collected within different regions by me was made possible by my position at TallyKhata and thus, respondents at varied settings were reached. The study will look into awareness, perceived usefulness and practical challenges of using digital business management apps with specific reference to TallyKhata. It also explicates how the demographic factors, type of business, and accessibility of technology affect product improvement and promotion measures.

The data was gathered in mid-November through the first week of December in 2025 when I performed as an intern at TallyKhata when active Super QR promotional campaigns were conducted. The thematic area of the research is perceived ease of use, usefulness, transaction related issues, customer influence and the support services availability. Wider regulatory, technical, or macroeconomic problems are recognized but are out of the primary focus of this study that is focused on the daily life of small business owners.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Global and Bangladesh Context of Digital Financial Inclusion

The term digital financial inclusion is used to describe the delivery of affordable, accessible, and effective digital financial services on digital platforms (such as mobile money, internet banking, and digital payment systems) to underserved customers, such as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and informal traders (Emerald Group Publishing, 2023). Digital finance has been known globally to boost economic involvement, enhance productivity, and financial stability amid small businesses by lowering transaction expenses, enhancing transparency, and facilitating access to formal financial institutions.

However, in economies of the developing world, the gains of digital financial inclusion are skewed. Infrastructure, digital literacy, affordability, and lack of trust are other structural aspects that impede adoption (GOV.UK, 2019). Micro and small entrepreneurs are particularly susceptible to these challenges due to the fact that they work with thin margins and little access to formal financial systems.

In Bangladesh, digital financial inclusion is directly linked to the fast growth of mobile financial services (MFS) providers i.e. bKash, Nagad, Rocket and emerging fintech platforms. Although in Bangladesh, considerable success has been attained in advancing the use of MFS on the individual level, at the SME level, the uptake of digital financial capabilities has been comparatively low in relation to the equivalent economies (The Daily Star, 2024). This is an important dislocation between national aspirations in digital areas (via the Digital Bangladesh and Smart Bangladesh initiatives) and the realities on the ground in confronting small business.

2.2 Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs and Small Traders

To SMEs and petty traders, digital financial inclusion is more than just the acknowledgement of digital payments. It involves the incorporation of digital solutions into the bookkeeping, inventory, customer credit, supplier payments, and access to formal finance (Emerald Press Publishing Limited, 2023). Research studies underscore the fact that SMEs are the greatest beneficiaries when digital financial services are integrated into a broader business management system as opposed to the provision of digital financial services as standalone payment solutions.

Bangladesh data suggests that a significant number of SMEs are semi-formal or informal in their operations and primarily use cash-based operations and keep records manually (UniversePG, 2025). Although this method is flexible and allows one to feel that they have control, it limits the access to credit, exposes them to cash losses, and limits the scale of a business in the long term. Efforts to close this divide undertaken by the use of digital platforms like TallyKhata combining digital bookkeeping with digital payment solutions like Super QR, put digital finance in the business efficiency category, and not a compliance liability.

Survey studies on small and petty traders in the developing setting reveal that switching to digital payments would enhance income stability, reach to customers, and financial discipline, and that

sufficient training and assistance are necessary to do so (Kristu Jayanti College, 2022). Nevertheless, digital financial instruments fail to get further than trial usage, unless there is a long-lasting involvement and localized training.

2.3 Barriers to Digital Adoption Among Small Businesses

The literature recognizes digital adoption barriers as multidimensional all the time. To describe the digital exclusion in Bangladesh, the report by GOV.UK (2019) proposes the following framework: 5A, which refers to the availability, affordability, awareness, ability, and agency. This framework is quite applicable even to SMEs and small traders though it was initially used on individuals.

Some of the barriers to availability are poor internet connection, power supply, and lack of network reliability especially in areas beyond the large cities. The affordability aspect is due to the cost of the device, mobile data cost, and transaction fees which are of importance to businesses whose margins are on narrow grounds (The Daily Star, 2024). Limited knowledge regarding the benefits of digital financial rewards, low digital literacy, and fear of committing expensive mistakes when conducting the transaction represent awareness and ability barriers (UniversePG, 2025).

Small entrepreneurs are particularly concerned with agency-related barriers. They are a deficit of confidence, unwillingness to change, being overwhelmed with the sense of loss of control, and fear of greater tax exposure or oversight (Kristu Jayanti College, 2022). Combined, these obstacles justify the fact that many SMEs still use cash even though the use of smartphones and exposure to digital platforms are very common.

2.4 Marketing Digital Financial Products to SMEs

The marketing of digital financial products to SMEs needs marketing strategies that are not similar to consumer-oriented strategies. The studies reveal that adoption of SME is not promoted by promotional messages but rather by perceived relevance, ease of use, trust and demonstrable value (Emerald Press Publishing, 2023). Classic campaigns of awareness cannot generate sustained usage by themselves. The research on digital marketing in Bangladesh indicates that SMEs that go digital, especially the use of social media, have an enhanced customer contact and improvement in sales (RSIS International, 2024). Nonetheless, digital marketing tools are applied in many business in a shallow manner without incorporating digital payments and back-office financial systems to maximize the power of digital transformation.

Product adoption literature is practitioner-focused and highlights the need to design the product in a user-oriented way, provide onboarding customization, and support customers (Contentsquare, 2025; Userpilot, 2025). Specific concepts like identifying aha moments, simplifying the onboarding process, in-app advice, and localism in native languages are particularly applicable to the case of fintech platforms aimed at small business customers.

Field activation, peer influence, visible merchant adoption, and responsive customer support are the methods of trust-building that are crucial in Bangladeshi context in breaking the barriers to skeptical attitudes to digital financial products. Such lessons are especially applicable to the

adoption of Super QR, where merchants will have to not only have the faith in the platform but also be willing to explain and market the same to their clients.

2.5 Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature reviewed has shown that technological, financial, informational and behavioral barriers that are interrelated are limiting the process of digital financial inclusion of SMEs in Bangladesh. Although national-level reports report on the general issues of digital adoption, whereas SME-based research shows structural and organizational barriers, few studies consider the lived experiences of small entrepreneurs in their interactions with fintechs at the adoption point.

The current literature tends to regard digital finance as a part of general digitalization or individual consumer instead of business user. Empirical literature on the perception of digital payment systems by small traders, what is hindering the successful use of digital payment systems post-onboarding, and how marketing, training, and product design can work together to change the adoption results remains a gap.

This gap can be filled by this study by concentrating on TallyKhata Super QR and small businesses in urban, peri-urban, and semi-rural environments. It combines the knowledge of the digital financial inclusion theory, SME-based digitalization literature and adoption strategies of the products to offer context-specific evidence that may be used to influence fintech practice and policy interventions in Bangladesh.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research is a quantitative study that follows a descriptive quantitative research design in investigating the factors affecting the adoption and effective use of Super QR of TallyKhata by the small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The reason why the descriptive method would be appropriate is that the study will not be about identifying causality but rather a clear picture of the existing perception, behaviours and the pattern of usage of the small business owners. It enables the study to determine the trends, attitudes, and the relationships among the important variables associated with the adoption of digital payment (Sreekumar & Sreekumar, 2025).

The quantitative approach was chosen due to the ability to gather structured and similar data of a large number of respondents. Close-ended questions (the majority of which were included in a structured questionnaire) ensured that the respondents used standardized information and it became possible to compare the answers given by the representatives of various business spheres and demographic categories (Unimrkt Research, n.d.). This design is directly beneficial to the purposes of the study that involve the level of awareness, understanding, perceived ease of use, economic and operational concerns, as well as the characters of the entrepreneurs with regard to adoption.

A descriptive quantitative design can also be used to justify product development and promotions of TallyKhata as it will be able to provide evidence-based results. The methodology is consistent with the previous fintech adoption literature on developing countries where informal business operations and uneven digital access to digital literacy have made uptake complex environments.

Furthermore, I have conducted qualitative survey for this paper to describe the views and experiences of the shopowners in a more thorough and subtle manner. Through these information gathering, I can create patterns, themes, and discoveries that help in creating a bigger picture of the situation. This method is especially useful in considering the bigger picture, as it assists in revealing the underlying factors, views, and motives that might be not apparent with the help of purely numerical data (LiGRE, 2023). Qualitative information will allow the analysis to be more in-depth, situational and closer to the real-world.

3.2 Participant Selection

The research was aimed at targeting the small business owners who are in the major category of users of TallyKhata i.e. petty traders, tea stall owners and grocery shop owners. These categories have been selected due to their high proportion of daily retail business in Bangladesh and because they represent one of the most applicable beneficiaries of the digital bookkeeping and payment solutions (Small and Medium Enterprises in Bangladesh: An Assessment Report - Center for International Private Enterprise, 2023).

To have a variety of realistic representations of small entrepreneurs, the research employed quota sampling. This sampling design enabled the selection of diverse types of businesses, gender, ages, and geographical locations to be done intentionally. There were quotas so that the sample would include representation of petty traders, tea stall owners, grocery shop owners and other minor retail types. Other quotas were used to make sure that both female and male entrepreneurs were involved as well as a combination of younger and older shop owners. The geographic quotas were urban, semi urban and peri urban such as some areas of Dhaka, the surrounding towns and the rural clusters around the towns.

My work as an intern at TallyKhata provided me with the chance to collect data, as I had to visit the field, conduct the promotion and communicate with customers. This enabled me to collect phone numbers of entrepreneurs in various locations and thus sampling quotas were achieved. Fifty entrepreneurs took part in the survey.

The inclusion criteria were that the participant operated a small business that employed less than fifty people, made decisions related to business, had the basic knowledge of digital payment tools, and volunteered to take part in the study. The respondents were active users of Super QR, registered users that do not use it but have been exposed to TallyKhata via marketing campaigns and non-adopters who have not been exposed to TallyKhata. This heterogeneity enabled the research to compare adoption and non-adoption behaviours.

Quota sampling is non-random, however, it suits a study in the informal sector that deals with businesses in the informal sector and few are likely to be fully random. The method enhances the representativeness of the sample because it will be included in groups that are meaningful to the research objectives (Fleetwood, 2025).

3.3 Data Collection Tools

The structured questionnaire was used to gather the data in a face-to-face interview and by phone call where the respondent was available. The questionnaire was drafted both in English and Bengali to consider the literacy and comfort levels. All the interviews were done in Bengali to make it more understandable and easier to communicate.

The questionnaire consisted of four major sections. The demographic and business information, including the age of the respondent, the education level, the type of business, the time span in which the business has been operating, the average level of transactions, and the use of digital financial services previously by the business owner, was gathered in the first section. The second section was used to assess awareness and attitude towards digital payments such as knowledge about digital benefits, awareness of Super QR, and attitudes to benefits or drawbacks. The third section examined the aspects of adoption of things like ease of use, transaction cost consideration, customer payment method, technological difficulties, issues of trust and security and experience with customer service. The last part examined adoption patterns among the adopters and non users' intentions together with the reasons why they continue using or abandoning.

The items were largely based on the five point Likert scale with a neutral point in the middle to promote a more definite answer. Five respondents were used during the pretest to find unclear items and make the questionnaire suitable culturally.

3.4 Data Analysis Plan

Information was analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The demographic characteristics, the awareness of the participants, the perceptions, and the usage patterns were summarized using descriptive statistics with frequencies, percentages, and the mean values. Cross tabulations enabled a comparison within business categories, gender, age groups, and adoption status.

The differences between the scores of adopters and non-adopters on the variables such as technological comfort, fee concerns and awareness scores were also tested with the help of comparative tests, including chi square tests, independent sample t tests. To test the correlation between a number of major continuous variables, Pearson correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between the variables such transaction volume and likelihood of adoption.

There were themed open-ended responses that aimed at determining recurrent concepts in regards to barriers, motivators and practical challenges. This qualitative element gave a better insight on the statistical findings.

The information was handled in an ethical and confidential manner.

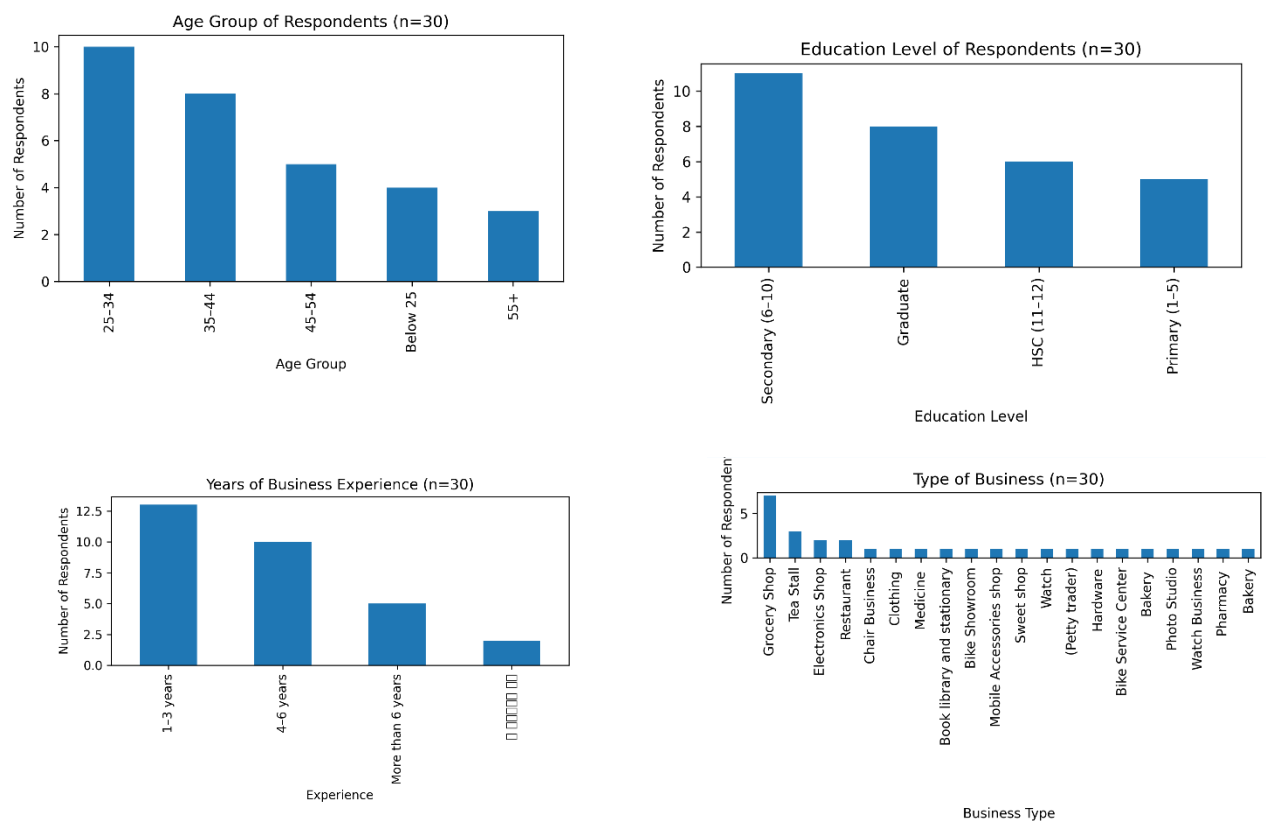
Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis from Quantitative Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The chapter demonstrates the results of the quantitative survey of the 30 small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. This study was principally aimed at knowing the reasons behind the adoption or non-adoption of digital payment systems, specifically the Super QR and other associated services provided by TallyKhata.

The findings are systematised as per the major research objectives. The analysis will be based on the awareness of digital payment, usability, cost, customer payment behavior, technical support, and demographic and business-related features. The results have been described in a simple and straightforward language so that people can easily understand.

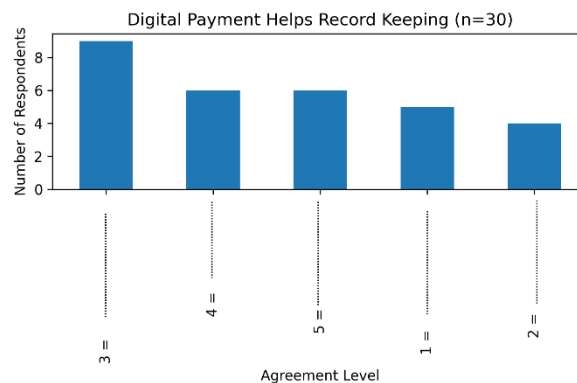
4.2 Profile of the Respondents



The sample of this research is a common sample of small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The respondents mostly were men and they were between the age of below 25 years to above 55 years in age and there was representation of various age groups. Education Regarding education, the respondents were of different levels of education with some being primary education, secondary

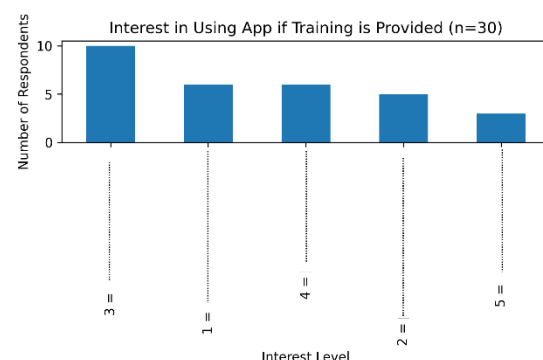
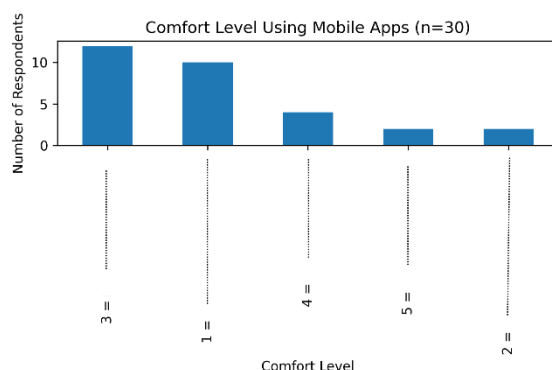
education and graduate level education. The majority of the businesses were in urban areas with a few respondents being semi-urban. These were grocery shops, tea stalls, electronic shops, chair-making businesses and service center businesses. The respondents were neither new business ventures nor very large businesses, as most of them had 1-6 years of business experience. Most businesses had a range of sales per day between BDT1,000 and BDT5,000 with most businesses employing few or no staff. This proves that the given work is primarily oriented at micro and small businesses, which are the most important target audience of digital payment options such as Super QR.

4.3 Awareness of Digital Payment Systems



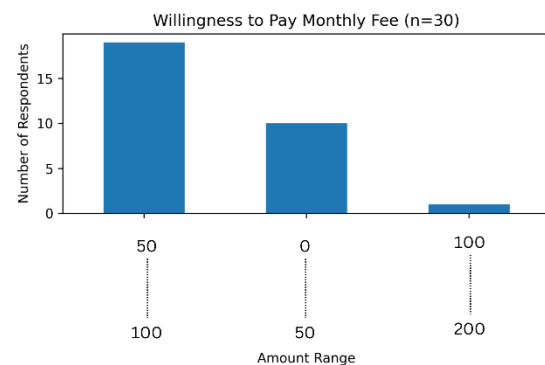
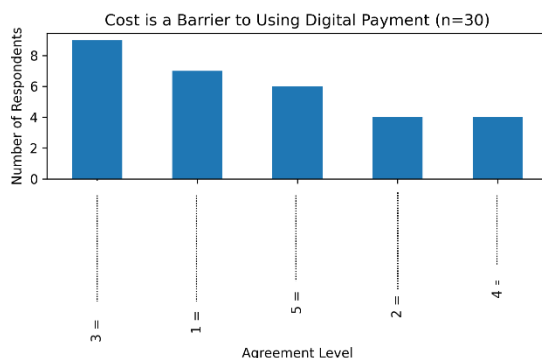
This research sample is a typical sample of small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The respondents were mainly men and aged between below 25 years and above 55 years old and they were representative of different age groups. Education In terms of education, the respondents were of varying levels of education with some being the primary education, secondary education and graduate level education. Most of the businesses were located in urban centers with some few respondents being semi-urban. These consisted of grocery stores, tea joints, electronic stores, chair making and service center businesses. The respondents were neither new business ventures nor very large businesses since majority had a business experience of 1-6 years. The most common options of sales per day ranged between BDT1000-BTD5000 and most of the businesses had none or few workers. This confirms that the target audience of the given work is oriented mostly at micro and small businesses which are the most significant target audience of the digital payment options like Super QR.

4.4 Ease of Use and Technology Difficulty



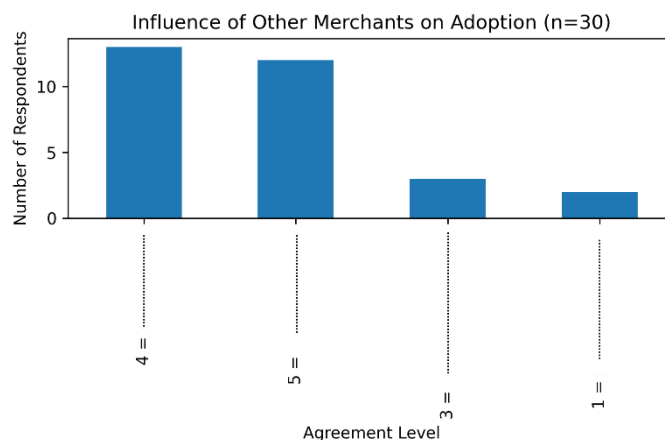
The comfort and ease of use with technology was found to be a significant factor in adoption. A significant number of the respondents said that they experience a neutral or a slight feeling of discomfort when operating new mobile applications. This demonstrates that small entrepreneurs tend to fear or hesitate technology-related. The questionnaire also included a question about whether the respondents would be more interested in using a new app in case of training or support. The findings are clear in the fact that interest was raised when training was mentioned. Many of the respondents claimed that they would be more comfortable with digital payment systems provided they had relevant guidance. This observation implies that technology challenge is not an ultimate obstacle. Rather it can be minimized by mere training schemes, demonstration, and continuous support. The findings outline that the ease of use has a strong connection with the access to help and learning.

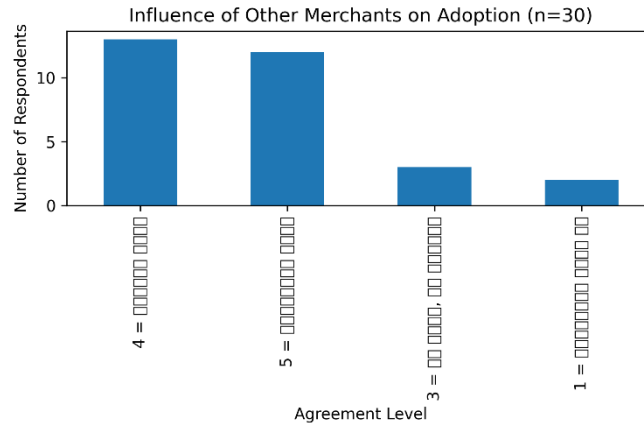
4.5 Cost and Pricing Issues



The issue of costs is significant in the choice of digital payment systems. The issue of transaction fees, Internet prices, and the general price of utilizing digital applications were the concerns of many respondents. Even minor expenses can be important to small businesses that have limited sales per day. The results of the survey indicate that the majority of the entrepreneurs are ready to pay a very insignificant sum of money monthly, and there are those who are not willing to pay at all. It means that small business owners are very sensitive in terms of price. These results indicate that the adoption barrier due to cost is among the most robust. Most entrepreneurs tend to adopt digital payment systems when they are cheap and the payoff is evidently greater than the expenditure.

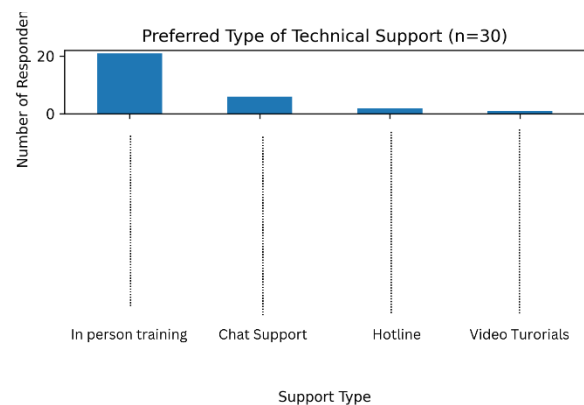
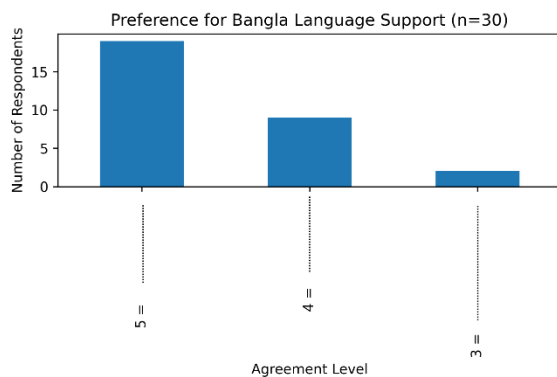
4.6 Customer Payment Behavior





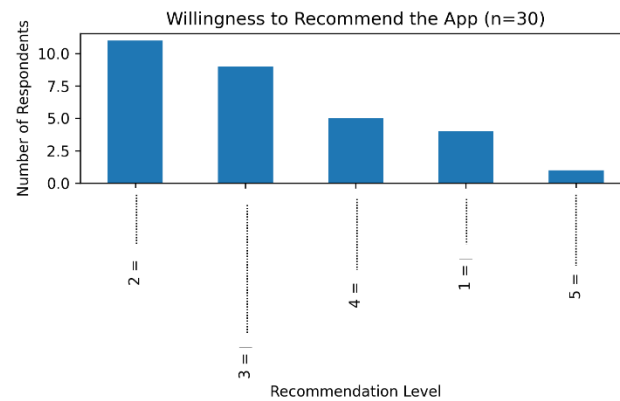
Merchants are highly dependent on customer payment behavior. Most of the respondents stated that their customers continue to love cash payments. When customers request to pay in cash, the merchants will not be as motivated to use digital payment methods. Simultaneously, the findings indicate that merchants are ready to turn to digital payment systems when customers insist on their use. Other respondents mentioned that their interest would be greater in case they see other customers or the presence of other shops that use digital payments. This observation indicates that receipt of digital payment is not just a choice on the part of a merchant, but also that of the customer and peer pressure. Customer adoption and merchant adoption go hand in hand.

4.7 Technical Support and Continued Usage



Access to and the quality of the technical support was identified as significant in the further use of digital payment systems. Several respondents strongly suggested that they would like to receive assistance in the Bangla language as they understand instructions better. Phone-based or face-to-face support was also preferred by the respondents over the use of written instructions. Knowing that there is assistance should they have issues with the use of the app, the entrepreneurs will feel confident enough. These results indicate that the level of trust and fear decrease with the high

levels of technical support. With appropriate support systems, it is possible not only to be encouraged to be adopted in the beginning but also to be used and recommended to others in the long run.



4.8 Summary of Key Results

The findings of this research demonstrate that digital payment adoption among small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh depends on various issues. The general perception of digital payment system is relatively high, yet not all entrepreneurs are capable of meeting the challenges connected to fear of technology, cost-related issues, customer attitudes, and insufficient training. Of these factors, training and technical support are seen to have the greatest positive influence on adoption. The results indicate that digital payment providers ought to be dedicated not only to technology but to education, affordability, and customer-merchant interaction to make use among small businesses increase.

Chapter 5: Discussion on Qualitative Study

5.1 Qualitative Findings and Interpretation

This sub-section provides the results of the qualitative interviews conducted with four small entrepreneurs. The qualitative study was aimed at getting more insight into the reasons of adoption and non-adoption of digital payment and business management applications and to complement the quantitative survey findings.

The qualitative results contribute to understanding why some tendencies were observed in the quantitative ones, in particular, in the awareness and ease of use, cost-related issues, customer behavior, and the technical support.

5.1.1 Business Context and Daily Practices

The qualitative respondents have a representative sample of businesses of various sizes, sectors and experience of years, including both traditional businesses in the field of grocery and kitchenware and those that are newer in the field e.g. gaming chairs sales. Old businesses have difficulties with the cash flow, stock management, and price changes whereas newer business have difficulties with low sales volume and uncertain conditions on the market. The practice of record keeping is diverse. Other respondents use manual means like the notepads or ledgers, others use Excel sheets or point of sale systems. Companies in the business of dealing with many products are more likely to adopt digital systems, but some businesses still experience some difficulties, including data entry errors. This is in line with the quantitative result that the business features affect digital tool adoption.

5.1.2 Awareness and Perceived Benefits of Digital Apps

The qualitative research demonstrates that there is an uneven awareness in regard to digital business apps. Other respondents were conversant with business management applications whereas others had never heard of applications like TallyKhata. Even in cases of awareness, knowledge was hardly detailed but it was general.

In general, respondents suppose that digital apps can be helpful due to the fact that:

- Save time
- Less confusion with customers
- Store records of transactions in a single location

But qualitative responses mean that awareness is not sufficient. Before an entrepreneur decides to use an app, he or she wants to be able to tell how the app can enhance their particular business operations. This observation explains the high numbers of neutral responses on the adoption in the quantitative results.

5.1.3 Technology Experience and Barriers to Adoption

Confidence in technology varies greatly among the respondents. Older business owners and traditional business owners are less comfortable with the use of mobile apps, and the younger and tech-savvy business owners are more certain. Some respondents have been reserved about new digital tools because of negative past experiences related to technology e.g. the cost of software issues, website fixing or logistics failures.

The key obstacles that were identified during the qualitative study are:

- App complexity
- Difficulty training employees
- Concerns about data security
- Managing large volumes of product data

At the same time, respondents emphasized that most of these barriers could be reduced through proper training and support. This directly supports the quantitative finding that training significantly increases willingness to adopt digital payment systems.

5.1.4 Support Needs, Language, and Feature Preferences

Training and technical support were identified by all the respondents as important. Some of the preferred ways of support include YouTube demonstrations, face-to-face demonstrations, call center services, and 24/7 technical support. It is easy to access and respond to support that is appreciated by respondents. Language became a major issue. Some of the respondents pointed out the interface in Bengali and assistance would simplify the use of digital tools considerably, particularly to employees who had low education or were not fluent in English. This qualitative observation is a very strong argument to the quantitative observation that there is an increase in confidence and ongoing use of Bangla when it is supported.

5.1.5 Social Influence and Adoption Decisions

The qualitative results demonstrate that the social influence has a minor but significant role. Business associations and formal networks cannot be considered as strong forces that should influence respondents to adopt technology. Instead, they rely on:

- Personal judgment
- Recommendations from trusted users
- Observed business benefits

Part of the respondents said that they found digital tools due to seeing the advertisements on Facebook or in the search of the app store, which can be interpreted to mean that exposure and visibility are important. Perceived usefulness and trust outweigh other perceived pressure in terms

of making adoption decisions. This is one of the reasons why peer influence had a moderate impact on the quantitative findings.

5.1.6 Overall Contribution of the Qualitative Findings

Altogether, the qualitative research demonstrates that small entrepreneurs do not resist digital tools, however, they are cautious and pragmatic in their choices. The adoption is based on whether the app:

- Is easy to use
- Offers clear business value
- Is affordable
- Provides strong training and support
- Uses a language they understand

The qualitative results reinforce and elaborate on the quantitative results by providing the human and practical explanation of the adoption behavior. The combination of the mixed-methods results indicates that digital payment adoption among the small business population in Bangladesh can be considerably raised by enhancing training, language support and trust-building strategies.

Chapter 6: Summary Discussion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is a general discussion summary of the research and gives practical recommendations on the study as evidenced by the results of the quantitative survey of 30 small entrepreneurs as well as the qualitative interviews of 4 business owners. This chapter is aimed at clarifying the general meaning of findings and recommending how digital payment and business management applications, including Super QR and TallyKhata, can be better adopted by small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh.

6.2 Summary Discussion of Key Findings

6.2.1 Awareness Exists, but Understanding Is Limited

The quantitative data indicate that most of the small business owners have heard about the idea of digital payment systems, yet a big number of them are neither inclined to adopt it nor do not know whether to do it. This trend is explained by the qualitative study. Although there are those entrepreneurs who have heard of apps such as TallyKhata, most of them have very little or no knowledge about how the apps would assist them in their business.

This demonstrates the fact that awareness campaigns do not suffice. Business people desire to have direct and concrete answers to their questions on the way digital payment systems will make their day to day business endeavors better.

6.2.2 Ease of Use and Technology Fear Are Major Barriers

Quantitative and qualitative results have a strong inclination of indicating technology fear and discomfort as the main impediments to adoption. A high number of respondents indicated that they were either neutral or uncomfortable when using mobile apps. Traditional and older business proprietors are particularly conservative. Nonetheless, one of the most crucial results is that the desire to use digital apps becomes much stronger in cases where training and support are provided. Qualitative responses prove that the entrepreneurs do not oppose technology, they desire instructions, demonstrations, and continuous assistance. This indicates that the factor of ease of use is not just related to the design of the apps but also in relation to the extent of support provided to the users.

6.2.3 Cost Sensitivity Influences Adoption Decisions

Small entrepreneurs are highly concerned about cost. The quantitative findings indicate that the majority of the respondents are ready to pay a lot or nothing more than digital payment services. This is supported by the qualitative study which demonstrates that the small businesses tend to

have difficulty with their cash flows and liquidity particularly in periods of price increase or budgets.

Entrepreneurs are keen when it comes to weighing the price of using an app against the anticipated benefit. They will not want extra costs in cases where the benefit is not known or delayed.

6.2.4 Customer Behavior Strongly Affects Merchant Adoption

The paper concludes that customer behavior is a major determinant in the adoption of digital payment systems by merchants. Most of the merchants do not want to receive digital payments unless it is required by customers. Merchants also lose interest in digital systems in the case that the customers want to pay in cash.

Qualitative responses also indicate that the entrepreneurs can see the real-life benefits and examples before implementing the new tools. This lays emphasis on the close association between customer adoption and merchant adoption.

6.2.5 Importance of Technical Support and Language

One of the strongest findings across both studies is the importance of language accessibility and technical support. Entrepreneurs prefer:

- Bangla language interfaces
- Phone or in-person support
- Simple access to assistance in case of difficulties

Qualitative results indicate that English-only interfaces and non-support lower confidence particularly among those staff who are less educated. Trust and confidence will be high when there is some support in Bangla, and provided in a straightforward manner.

6.3 Overall Interpretation

The combination of the quantitative and the qualitative results gives an apparent image. The digital payment systems do not fear the small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh, yet they base their choices to adopt these new changes on pragmatic and practical issues. The adoption is based on the system being:

- Easy to understand
- Affordable
- Supported with training
- Available in Bangla
- Useful for their specific business

Digital payment adoption is therefore a human and behavioral issue, not only a technological one.

6.4 Recommendations

Judging by the results of this research, it is proposed to recommend the following recommendations:

6.4.1 Improve Training and Onboarding

Digital payment providers should:

- Offer simple, hands-on training programs
- Use in-person demonstrations and short video tutorials
- Provide step-by-step guidance during the early usage period

Training should focus on real business situations, not technical terms.

6.4.2 Strengthen Bangla Language Support

Apps should:

- Offer full Bangla interfaces, including admin panels
- Provide Bangla-language call center and video support
- Use simple words instead of technical language

This will increase confidence and reduce fear among small entrepreneurs and their employees.

6.4.3 Keep Costs Low and Transparent

Service providers should:

- Keep fees low or free for small businesses
- Clearly explain any costs involved
- Highlight how digital payments can increase efficiency or reduce losses

Clear cost–benefit communication is essential for adoption.

6.4.4 Encourage Customer–Merchant Ecosystems

To increase adoption:

- Promote digital payments to both customers and merchants
- Encourage use through local examples and success stories

- Use nearby shops and markets as demonstration zones

This will help create a network effect and normalize digital payments.

6.4.5 Improve Technical Support Systems

Providers should:

- Ensure quick response support
- Offer multiple support channels (call, video, in-person)
- Follow up with users after onboarding

Reliable support increases trust and long-term usage.

6.5 Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that the use of digital payments by small entrepreneurs in Bangladesh relies on trust, ease of use, guidance, and applicability. Although the awareness is on the rise, its adoption will only rise when digital solutions are created and implemented in a manner that aligns with actual needs and constraints of small businesses.

Through emphasis on training, Bangla support, affordability, and interaction between customers and merchants, digital payment providers can play a major role in improving adoption and help in digital transformation of small enterprises in Bangladesh.

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Appendix:

Quantitative Questionnaire

Section A: Demographic and Business Information

1. Age:

- ☐ Under 25
- ☐ 25–34
- ☐ 35–44
- ☐ 45–54
- ☐ 55 and above

2. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

3. Education Level:

- ☐ No formal education
- ☐ Primary (1–5)
- ☐ Secondary (6–10)
- ☐ HSC (11–12)
- ☐ Graduate

4. Location:

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Peri-urban
- ☐ Rural
- ☐ District/City: _____

5. Type of Business:

- ☐ Petty trader
- ☐ Teastall owner
- ☐ Grocery shop owner
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

6. Years in Business:

- Less than 1 year
 - 1–3 years
 - 4–6 years
 - More than 6 years
7. Average Daily Sales:
- Less than 1000 BDT
 - 1000–2999 BDT
 - 3000–4999 BDT
 - 5000 BDT and above
8. Number of Employees (if any):
- 0
 - 1–2
 - 3–5
 - More than 5

Section B: Digital Tools and Financial Services

1. Do you own or use a smartphone for your business?
 - Yes
 - No
2. Which mobile financial services do you use for your business?
 - Bkash
 - Nagad
 - Rocket
 - Others (please specify): _____
 - None
3. How do you currently keep records for your business?
 - Manual ledger/notebook
 - Excel or other computer tools
 - Business app/software
 - Do not keep records
4. Have you heard about business management apps like Tallykhata?
 - Yes

- No
- 5. Have you used any business management app before?
 - Yes (please specify): _____
 - No

Section C: Digital Skills and Comfort

1. How comfortable are you with using mobile apps in general?
(1 = Not at all comfortable; 5 = Very comfortable)
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
2. How likely are you to try a new business app if given support or training?
(1 = Not likely; 5 = Very likely)
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5

Section D: Perceptions, Barriers, and Needs (Likert-Scale)

For each statement, please rate your agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree):

1. Using a digital app would help me keep better records of my business.
2. I find using new apps or digital tools confusing.
3. High costs prevent me from using digital business tools.
4. I am concerned about security and privacy in mobile apps.
5. I don't have enough time to learn new technologies.
6. My phone or internet is not good enough for using such apps.
7. I would trust a business app more if other local shop owners were using it.
8. Customer support in local language would help my adoption of business apps.

Section E: App Features and Preferences

1. Which app features do you think would be most helpful? (Select up to 3)
 - Stock/inventory management

- Cash flow tracking
 - Digital payments integration
 - Accounts receivable and payable
 - Business SMS/notifications
 - Multi-business management
 - Reports/analytics for business performance
2. How much would you be willing to pay per month for a useful business app?
- Nothing
 - Less than 100 BDT
 - 100–299 BDT
 - 300–499 BDT
 - 500 BDT and above

Section F: Communication and Support

1. How do you prefer to get information about new business tools or support?
- Friend/other entrepreneurs
 - Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp)
 - In-person training/events
 - Printed leaflets
 - Local business group/association
 - TV/radio
2. If you faced a problem with a business app, which support option would you prefer?
- Phone/helpline
 - Chat/WhatsApp
 - In-person support at local shop
 - User manual/video tutorial

Section G: Adoption and Advocacy

1. How likely are you to recommend a good business app to others?
(1 = Not likely; 5 = Very likely)
- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4

- 5
2. What is the single biggest reason you would use a business management app?
- Save time
 - Improve profits
 - Reduce mistakes
 - Easier accounts/records
 - Peer recommendation
 - Required by financial service/provider
 - Other (please specify): _____

Qualitative Questionnaire

Section A: Business Context & Daily Practices

1. Can you tell me about your business?
2. How do you currently keep records of your sales, purchases, and payments?
3. What is your experience, if any, with using mobile phones or apps for business purposes?

Section B: Awareness and Attitudes Toward Digital Apps

1. Have you ever heard about business management apps like Tallykhata?
2. What do you think are the main benefits of using a digital business app for someone like you?
3. Do you have any concerns or hesitations about using mobile apps or digital tools for your business?

Section C: Experience with Technology & Barriers

1. Can you describe any past experiences, whether good or bad, with using technology for business purposes?
2. What difficulties or obstacles do you face that might stop you from using a business management app?
3. Have you ever received any training or support to use new technology? If so, what was your experience?

Section D: Needs & Preferences

1. Which features would you consider most useful if you had an app for your business?
2. How would you prefer to learn about and receive support for using such an app?
3. If you could change or recommend one thing to make these apps easier or more attractive to people like you, what would it be?

Section E: Social Influence & Adoption Drivers

1. Who or what would convince you to try to regularly use a digital business app?
2. Are there groups, associations, or networks (e.g., local business clubs, unions) you trust that could help introduce or train you in new business technologies?

Section F: Closing & Additional Insights

1. Is there anything else you want to share about your feelings, expectations, or worries about using digital solutions in your business?

Copy of company-provided internship confirmation/acceptance letter (attached)



October 13, 2025

Jenifer Hossain
Director- International Affairs, Alumni Affairs
& In-Charge-Career Services Office
University Of Liberal Arts Bangladesh
688 Beribadh Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207
Re: Acceptance letter for the internship program at TallyKhata.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter dated September 24, 2025 we would like to inform you that Mr. Fardin Haque (ID# 221011018) of BBA from University Of Liberal Arts Bangladesh Of IT is permitted to do his internship program at TallyKhata. The duration of this internship program will be 03 months and will start on September 15, 2025, with the following terms & conditions:

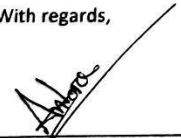
- ☐ During the internship, Mr. Fardin Haque will be supervised by Mr. Muhammad Awlad Hossain Head of Growth and Marketing, Growth and Marketing Department of TallyKhata.
- ☐ He needs to abide by the rules and regulations of the company during his internship.
- ☐ He needs to produce a report on the projects to his supervisor upon completion of the internship.
- ☐ He will not either during his internship with the Company or after the completion of such internship, except with the written consent of the Company utilize or divulge to any person or persons any secret or confidential knowledge or information which he may have acquired as a result of his internship by the Company or by any of its subsidiary or associated companies.

Please contact with undersigned for details, if required.

You are cordially requested to take necessary action accordingly.

Thank you

With regards,



Antora Hayat Khan
Human Resources

INTERNSHIP PROPOSAL FORM

Name:	Fardin Haque
ID:	221011018
Department:	ULAB School of Business
Supervisor's Name (Faculty):	Asif Uddin Ahmed
Organization Name:	TallyKhata
Internship Title:	Barriers to Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs in Bangladesh: Insights from TallyKhata

Fardin

Student's signature & date

9/10/25

Supervisor's signature & date

Asif Uddin Ahmed

1/11/2025

Turnitin Report

Barriers to Digital Financial Inclusion for SMEs in Bangladesh: Insights from TallyKhata

ORIGINALITY REPORT

2%	2%	1%	1%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	David Mhlanga, Mufaro Dzingirai. "Financial Inclusion and Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa", Routledge, 2025 Publication	<1%
2	Submitted to University of Glamorgan Student Paper	<1%
3	core.ac.uk Internet Source	<1%
4	researchoutput.csu.edu.au Internet Source	<1%
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