



Research Report on
**Empowering the Rural Economy: The Role of CMSMEs in
Achieving Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development
Goals (SDGs)**

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
BSCIC	Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation
BTI	BSCIC Training Institute
CAD	Computer-aided Design
e-Commerce	Electronic- Commerce
ERC	Export Registration Certificate
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IE	Industrial Estate
Industry 4.0	Fourth Industrial Revolution
IoT	Internet of Things
IRC	Import Registration Certificate
IT	Information Technology
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MIS	Management Information System
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OSS	One-Stop Service
SCITI	Small and Cottage Industries Training Institute
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution

Abstract

This study report analyzes the crucial function of Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) in strengthening the rural economy and promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Bangladesh. The report emphasizes the significance of rural economic development in attaining inclusive national growth and identifies CMSMEs as essential drivers for employment generation, income distribution, and the promotion of sustainable practices. A thorough literature analysis consolidates international and regional studies, demonstrating the role of CMSMEs in fostering socio-economic resilience, gender equity, financial inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

The study utilized a mixed-methods approach to gather 414 valid responses from rural CMSME proprietors and managers via a cross-sectional survey, implementing a stratified random sampling strategy. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis (Ordinary Least Squares method) were employed to evaluate the influence of CMSME activities on rural economic empowerment. The regression model had substantial explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.6296$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.6157$), with all predictors—job creation, income production, gender equality, access to finance, and skill development—exhibiting significant positive effects at the 1% level.

The results indicate that CMSMEs play a crucial role in local employment, income generation, women's empowerment, and environmental stewardship. Nonetheless, obstacles such as inadequate pay standards, insufficient involvement of marginalized populations, deficiencies in financial literacy, restricted access to finance, and impediments to digital transformation persist. Twenty-one thematic results were discovered, encompassing topics such as salary disbursement, labor engagement, supply chain efficiency, and business resilience. Notwithstanding these limitations, CMSMEs are acknowledged as essential contributors to rural economic sustainability, with 97.84% of respondents confirming their transformative impact.

The research presents extensive policy recommendations aimed at government policymakers, financial institutions, development organizations, and CMSME businesses. Essential recommendations encompass augmenting financial accessibility, advancing digital infrastructure, advocating for gender-inclusive practices, fortifying

skills training, endorsing sustainable company models, and cultivating social capital and networking opportunities.

In conclusion, CMSMEs exert a significant and quantifiable influence on rural economic empowerment and sustainable development. Through focused interventions to tackle existing difficulties, CMSMEs can significantly enhance their contribution to fostering inclusive growth and mitigating inequities in rural Bangladesh.

1 Introduction

The rural economy is significant for national development, especially in developing countries such as Bangladesh, where a large portion of the population lives in rural part and depends on agriculture and informal enterprises for economic survival. The concept of equality in economic progress and long-term sustainability is mainly supported by CMSMEs, which encompass cottage, micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. The International Labor Organization (2015) and the United Nations Development Programme (2020) attest that these enterprises rigorously advance the Sustainable Development Goals by improving employment level, reducing poverty, and boosting equitable resource content. CMSMEs are pivotal for equitable economic development, constituting over 90% of all enterprises and engaging 70% of the global workforce (OECD, 2017). CMSMEs facilitate the diversification of rural economies and strengthening women empowerment, youth, and deprived groups by establishing localized employment opportunities and fostering rudimentary entrepreneurship (ADB, 2020). Especially accustom in fulfilling different Sustainable Development Goals, including No Poverty, Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, they are differentiated by decentralization and focus to local requirements. CMSMEs in rural economies frequently faces barriers like restricted access to capital, inadequate logistic, lack of skilled labor, and extensively unfriendly regulations, not pertaining their importance (World Bank, 2022). To fully extract their potential, it is obvious to alleviate these challenges through strategic policy measures and institutional assistance. This research looking forward to investigate the crucial role of CMSMEs in promoting rural economies to flourish the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda for 2030 and to foster inclusive growth. It will also help how their progress may facilitate these objectives.

1.1 Rational of the study

The rural economy in Bangladesh is an essential driver for national development, accommodating the bulk of the people and supporting agricultural and informal economic activities. Notwithstanding substantial contributions to GDP and employment, rural regions persistently face elevated poverty rates, inequality, and underdevelopment. Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) have been crucial in tackling these issues by creating employment, fostering gender

inclusion, alleviating poverty, and bolstering localised economic activities. However, their potential is hindered by obstacles including insufficient access to finances, restricted digital capabilities, low financial literacy, and inadequate infrastructure.

This study aims to thoroughly evaluate the contribution of CMSMEs to promoting inclusive growth and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in rural Bangladesh. The aim of this study seeks to address the knowledge gap about the influence of CMSMEs on rural empowerment across economic, social, and environmental aspects using empirical data. It seeks to educate policymakers, development stakeholders, and financial institutions with the existing landscape, obstacles, and implementable methods for enhancing CMSME contributions to sustainable rural development.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To analyze the present activities of CMSMEs in rural regions and comprehend their significance in business operations, employment, and market engagement.
- ii. To evaluate the impact of CMSME initiatives on rural economic empowerment, encompassing job creation, income generation, financial inclusion, and sustainable business practices.
- iii. To offer policy recommendations for the sustainable growth of CMSMEs and the attainment of SDGs.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Although CMSMEs constitute a substantial portion of Bangladesh's GDP and rural employment, their potential is inadequately implemented due to structural and systemic obstacles. Principal issues encompass constrained financial access, inadequate policy understanding, gender inequality, restricted market entry, insufficient skills development, and obstacles in digital transformation and environmental sustainability. There is a deficiency of thorough, empirical evidence that measures the impact of CMSME operations on rural economic empowerment and their correlation with SDG targets.

The primary research question is: To what degree do CMSME activities affect rural economic empowerment in Bangladesh, and what obstacles hinder their full contribution to inclusive growth and the Sustainable Development Goals?

2 Literature Review

Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) are considered as a pivotal component of Bangladesh's economy, especially in rural areas. These industries count for 25% of the nation's GDP and enable a substantial portion of the workforce (Bangladesh Bank, 2023). This literature review looking forward to determine the role of CMSMEs in boosting inclusive growth and promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within rural region of Bangladesh. The significance of Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) is being significantly accustomed in the worldwide aura to attain the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially within rural cluster. These firms are often integrated into the socio-economic frame of rural communities, accelerating income generation, employment opportunities, and innovation. In nations such as Bangladesh, where a main segment of the populace inherits rural regions, CMSMEs are important for worsen poverty, diminishing inequality, and pursuing sustainable economic progress. This research review examines the degree to which CMSMEs incorporate inclusive growth and the attainment of the SDGs, focusing specifically on Bangladesh and other developing nations creating in a more feasible economy.

2.1 CMSME

Various economies and employ a substantial number of persons. They symbolize the process of growth and progress. The performance of the MSME/CMSMEs sector is strongly linked to the performance of the nation (Chittithaworn et al., 2011). Furthermore, MSMEs/CMSMEs are typically classified based on either quantitative or qualitative criteria. Quantitative factors refer to measurable aspects of businesses, such as their market share, financial indicators like available funds, capital, turnover, asset value, profit, as well as quantitative records like the number of employees. However, in Nigeria, MSMEs/CMSMEs are classified only based on their number of employees and total assets, excluding land.

The data provided pertain to the European definition of SMEs for statistical reasons.

According to this definition, SMEs are enterprises that employ up to 249 individuals. The breakdown of these firms is as follows: micro firms employ 1-9 persons, small firms employ 10-49 persons, and medium firms employ 50-249 persons. Based on the

World Bank Enterprise Surveys, which cover more than 25,000 small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in developing countries, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has calculated that direct exports account for just 7.6% of total sales for SMEs in the manufacturing sector. In contrast, major manufacturing enterprises have direct exports representing 14.1% of their entire sales. Africa has the smallest proportion of exports among emerging regions, accounting for only 3%, while developing Asia has a higher proportion of 8.7%. The involvement of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in the export of services in developing countries is minimal, accounting for only 0.9% of the overall sales of services. Conversely, large firms contribute substantially more, accounting for 31.9% (WTO, 2016). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are integral to the economy and extensive commercial networks, particularly in numerous countries, including those under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) constitute over 99% of all businesses within the OECD region. They are the principal sources of employment, constituting over 70% of jobs on average, and are substantial contributors to value creation, accounting for between 50 and 60% of value produced on average. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in emerging economies comprise up to 45% of the total workforce and contribute 33% to the gross domestic product (GDP). Informal firms, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), constitute over 50% of employment and gross domestic product (GDP) across most countries, irrespective of their income levels. The growth of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) can significantly contribute to economic diversification and resilience, resulting in a more sustainable economy. This is specifically applied for countries with boundless resources that are extensively vulnerable to changes in commodity prices (OECD 2017).

Table 1 Role of SMEs in Developing and Developed Economies (Synthesized by researchers from (WTO, 2016))

Aspect	Percentage	Sectors and Company classification
Direct Exports	7.6% of total sales	Manufacturing SMEs
	14.1%	Large Manufacturing
Export Share	3%	African developing economies
	8.7	Developing economies of Asia
SME Participation in export share	0.9 of total sales	Developing countries
	31.9	Large enterprise
OECD Group	99% of all companies	SMEs
	70% of employment	
	50-60% of the value created	
Developing economies	45% of all companies	SMEs
	70% of employment	
	33% of GDP	

In the previous policy (2016) in Bangladesh, CMSMEs were recognized as the primary catalyst for the growth and expansion of export-oriented industries, the development of specialized industries by making the best use of local resources, and the provision of opportunities for women entrepreneurs (WE). The policy sought to furnish legal and infrastructural support to stimulate investment. Export diversification, heightened emphasis on foreign direct investment (FDI), and prioritization of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) are important tenets of contemporary industrial policy. The new strategy encompasses multiple approaches with defined timetables for execution to bolster a vibrant and well-trained industry and service sector. Additionally, there is a particular focus on less developed areas to provide a steady supply of raw materials for enterprises who are focused on exporting and adding more value to their products.

Table 2 Categorization of CMSME sectors in Bangladesh (Industrial Policy, 2022)

Enterprise	Fixed Assets Excluding land and buildings)	Employees	Loan limit
Micro	Tk 10 lakh- Tk 75 lakh (manufacturing)	16-30 or less	Tk 1 crore
	Less than Tk 10 lakh (service)	15 max	Tk. 25 lakh
Cottage	Less than 10 Lakh	15 max	Tk 10 lakh
Small	Tk 75 lakh – Tk 15 crore (manufacturing)	31-120	Tk. 20 crore
	Tk 10 lakh – Tk 2 crore (service)	16-50	Tk. 5 crore
Medium	Tk 15 crore – Tk 50 crore (manufacturing)	121-300 (garments 1000 minimum)	Tk. 75 crore
	Tk 2 crore – Tk 30 crore (service)	51-120	Tk. 50 crore
Trading sector	Less than Tk 10 lakh (micro enterprise)	15 max	Tk. 25 lakh
	Tk 30 lakh – Tk 2 crore (small industry)	16-50	Tk. 5 crore

Priorities include developing the capacity for technology and adapting to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), as well as addressing difficulties related to skilled workforce development, diversifying exports, and exploring new markets. To encourage both local and foreign investment, administrative procedures will be simplified, and there will be an expansion of services such as industrial parks and economic zones. The government has announced various trade agreements at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels, in collaboration with national and international organizations. These agreements aim to promote women entrepreneurs and provide financial support to cottage, micro, small, and medium enterprises. Additionally, efforts

will be made to enhance the capabilities of the private sector to sustain themselves during natural and man-made disasters. The government also plans to support import substitute industries, as well as backward and forward linkage industries. In this regard, specific support will be provided to the light engineering sector.

The government has decided to address the issue of the informal sector by implementing a registration process and developing a time-bound action plan at the national level. An agenda has been devised to formalize informal establishments, which is a commendable endeavor. However, it is anticipated that this task will be challenging due to the lack of awareness among informal entrepreneurs regarding the comprehensive advantages of formalization, as well as their apprehension towards the rigorous administrative procedures that entail both financial and temporal investments. Attention must also be given to the implementation of policies. The industrial policy introduced several initiatives for start-ups and outlined strategies to establish a conducive climate for their growth. BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation) fosters the development of new entrepreneurs by offering support services, advisory services, and comprehensive one-stop services (OSS) at BSCIC centers. They will also provide training and specifically promote entrepreneurship in the field of information and communication technology (ICT). This is a positive development, nevertheless, it is necessary to reassess the trustworthiness of BSCIC in every area. The provided link leads to an editorial article on the website "businesspostbd.com" discussing the benefits of an industrial policy for the growth of small and medium-sized

The program also prioritized the development of a range of export-oriented businesses, fostering a favorable environment for cottage, micro, small, and indium companies, and encouraging increased domestic and foreign investment in the country. Entrepreneurs in the informal sector will receive an MSME certificate after completing an online program and being registered in the national database. The National Productivity Organization and the Informal Sector Industry Skills Council will implement essential programs aimed at enhancing the productivity of enterprises in the informal sector. The provided link leads to an article about the inclusion of the informal sector in the industrial policy. Policy Framework The government of Bangladesh has adopted several initiatives, including the SME Policy 2022, the establishment of the SME

Foundation, and dedicated credit schemes through Bangladesh Bank. Yet, implementation remains fragmented. Financial Access While schemes like SME refinancing exist, they are underutilized due to complex application processes and collateral requirements (Ahmed, 2001). The digital financing gap persists, particularly in rural settings. Women Entrepreneurship Though there are policies targeting women-led CMSMEs, cultural and logistical barriers continue to limit their growth (Yunus, 2003).

2.2 Present Situation of the Rural Economy through CMSMEs in Different Countries

The rural economy, especially in developing and transition economies, is increasingly shaped by the contributions of Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs). These enterprises are often the backbone of rural livelihoods, supporting employment, innovation, and inclusive growth.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, CMSMEs contribute nearly 25% to the GDP and employ about 87% of the industrial workforce, most of whom are in rural areas (Bangladesh Bank, 2023). Post-COVID recovery efforts saw targeted financial stimulus packages for CMSMEs, which helped revive rural economic activity. However, access to formal finance remains a major bottleneck for most rural enterprises (ADB, 2022).

India

In India, rural CMSMEs account for around 45% of total manufacturing output and 40% of exports. Government initiatives like the MUDRA scheme and the PMEGP (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme) have fueled entrepreneurship in rural belts (MSME Ministry of India, 2022). Yet, rural CMSMEs are facing high credit risks and digital divide challenges in reaching e-commerce platforms (World Bank, 2023a).

Vietnam

Vietnam's rural economy has been invigorated by the integration of CMSMEs into global value chains, particularly in agriculture and handicrafts. About 30% of rural employment is tied to non-farm CMSMEs (ILO, 2022). Government support through simplified business registration and e-commerce training has enhanced rural business resilience (UNDP, 2023).

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, CMSMEs form a critical part of rural income diversification. The Ethiopian government has implemented strategies under the Micro and Small Enterprises Development Strategy (MSEDS), with mixed success due to issues in infrastructure, electricity, and marketing access (ILO, 2021).

Indonesia

Indonesia's rural CMSMEs account for over 60% of employment and have been crucial in reducing rural poverty. The pandemic disrupted operations, but digital transformation initiatives like "SMEs Go Digital" have enabled many rural enterprises to recover and adapt (OECD, 2022).

Kenya

In Kenya, CMSMEs represent 98% of all businesses and employ more than 80% of the working population, with a significant share operating in rural areas. However, rural CMSMEs face challenges related to informal business status, limited access to credit, and low productivity (World Bank, 2022).

Across the globe, CMSMEs are foundational to rural economies. Although the level of success differs, these firms frequently have analogous limitations—insufficient funding, market accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, and deficient digital literacy. It is essential to tackle these difficulties via legislative assistance, digital inclusion, and capacity building to sustainably improve rural economies.

2.3 CMSMEs and Rural Employment Generation

CMSMEs are crucial for job formation, particularly in rustic and semi-urban localities. Hossain et al. (2023) emphasize that CMSMEs acclimatize surplus labor from the agricultural sector, therefore broadening rural occupation. Banerjee and Rahman (2019) reveal that economic participation for CMSMEs significantly reduces rural destitution and unemployment. In developing nations, CMSMEs composed over 90% of all enterprises and give rise to 60–70% of total employment (OECD, 2017). In Bangladesh, CMSMEs comprises of roughly 25% of GDP and 40% of full workforce (Bangladesh Bank, 2021). Rural-based CMSMEs habitually engage in farming, craftwork, textiles, and food processing, inspiring and gender inclusivity. CMSMEs play a critical role in empowering understated inhabitants, such as women and youth. Kabeer (2017) discerns CMSMEs expedite economic engagement for rural women, providing a roadmap for autonomy and determining target. Ramification in job opportunities creation, CMSMEs in rural regions act as buffers against urban migration by creating localized employment facilities. Harvie (2004) asserts that the dissemination of economic activity via CMSMEs bolsters more equal regional growth. Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) are crucial to Bangladesh's rural economy, as they create employment, lessen poverty, and foster equitable growth. In 2023, CMSMEs account for 99.84% of all firms in Bangladesh and come up with almost 25% to the GDP, as announced by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS, 2023). A significant number of these firms are positioned in rural regions and act as pivotal providers of non-agricultural employment and income ramifications for rural households (ADB, 2022).

2.4 Contribution to Inclusive Growth

The inclusive nature of CMSMEs stems from their accessibility to low-income entrepreneurs, particularly women and youth. According to Islam and Aktaruzzaman (2022), women's participation in rural enterprises through CMSMEs has empowered communities and enhanced household incomes. The inclusive employment effects of CMSMEs help achieve SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) (Sultana & Hossain, 2021). Review of related Literature Perspectives on Economic and Inclusive Growth Concepts Economic growth, indexed by the gross domestic product (GDP), is central in the development literature discourse. In spite of its flaws, it still remains an unassailable yardstick for assessing the performance of an

economy overtime and between economies at any given point in time. Agwal (2019) defines economic growth as an increase in the market value of the goods and services provided by an economy over time. It is a result of the rearrangement of resources of a country in ways that are more valuable (Romer, 2018). Economic growth does not occur by accident or in isolation, but by the conscious effort made by people in a nation to alter their resource to make them more valuable. Modern development experts have begun to highlight the shortcomings of using economic growth in assessing the wider ramifications of development in a country and in the welfare of its individual members. The measuring benchmarks of economic growth largely fail to show how growth has improved an individual's welfare in society. As Aleksey and Yuner (2015) observed, economic growth is essential but not sufficient on its own in improving the welfare of a population. There may be growth, but income is unequally distributed, creating a wider gap between the rich and the poor, and unemployment still on the increase. Proponents of new economic growth claim that economic growth is useful when measuring the economic performance of a country but argue that it is not a comprehensive performance measurement. In order words, the growth is not inclusive in the sense that it fails to take into consideration every individual in society. It is a kind of growth that does not improve the welfare of all groups of the population (Romer, 2018; Aleksey & Yuner, 2015). It does not assure equal financial security; instead, it is concerned with the increase in production and consumption of goods and services. United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2017), states that economic growth can reduce inequality and extreme poverty only if its benefits are spread widely across the population. Following these shortcomings of economic growth some researchers like Van den Berg (2017) called for a development approach that goes beyond growth and income and ensures that all the benefits of growth are spread equitably across all parts of society unusually large groups of vulnerable poor populations. Consequently, he daubed such a growth 'inclusive growth', which is broad-based growth that cuts across sectors of the country. Inclusive growth is that which encompasses all excluded people, especially the poor and vulnerable in society and focuses on the distribution of social and material benefits across social group and categories (Felife, 2012; Aleksey & Yuner, 2015; Van, 2017; Romer, 2018). Inclusive growth is best defined as: "when it takes place in the sectors in which the poor work (agriculture), occurs in places where the poor live (undeveloped areas with few resources), uses the factors of production

that the poor possess (unskilled labour) and reduces the prices of consumer items that the poor consume (e.g. food, fuel and clothing)” (Paloma, 2015: 3). The means to achieve all-inclusive growth is by embarking on economic development that deals with the improvement of the welfare of all groups of people in society. The feature of economic development is in improving the welfare of all groups of the population to increase financial security. This suggests that growth is inclusive when it initiates socio-economic possibilities that ensure fair access and opportunities to them. The assumption as captured in Ogujiuba and Alehile (2011) postulates that inclusive growth is an extension of the pro-poor growth hypothesis because it entails expanding the size of the middle class. The supposition is that this type of growth is economically and politically favorable to the majority of the participants in an economy. Notably, inclusive growth is distinct from income redistribution because while the latter, as stressed by Deaton (2005), reduces income disparities in the short run the former takes a long-term perspective that creates productive employments that allows more people to contribute and to benefit from economic growth.

2.5 CMSMEs and Rural Industrialization

Rural industrialization in Bangladesh is largely driven by the CMSME sector. Chowdhury and Rashid (2021) argue that CMSMEs facilitate backward and forward linkages in agriculture and manufacturing. They play a catalytic role in cluster-based growth and rural value chains. This decentralized industrialization aligns with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). In the year 2015, the world leaders presented 2030 agenda for sustainable development, and it was adopted. The 8th of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is sustainable growth, which UNDP (2017) interpreted as growth in the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental. That is translated to mean full productive employment and decent work for all (UNDP, 2017). The aim of the society is no longer only for economic growth but an economic development that is sustainable, which increases the level and quality of life, reduces the share of expenses on food, and income inequality in the society. These world agenda aim to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice and tackle climate change. The means of achieving this is by providing youth empowerment and women economic empowerment and decent work for all. Others are by building a dynamic, sustainable, people-oriented economy. Growth exhibits some quantitative characteristics when it results in changes in the number of goods and services and reflects the dynamics of

these changes. Growth can also have some qualitative characteristic when it exhibits the possibilities of the economic system to meet the new growing needs of the society. Intensive economic growth can be achieved when there are qualitative improvements in the factors of production. Examples are the use of ultra-modern equipment in the production of goods, cost-effect production, non-waste technologies, skilled workforce and others (Aleksey & Yuner, 2015). Extensive economic growth is characterized by a quantitative increase in the use of one or more factors of production. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Economic Development World Bank (2006) defines medium enterprises as those enterprises that have at most three hundred (300) employees with an annual turnover not exceeding fifteen (15) million US dollar, while small enterprises have fewer than fifty (50) staff members and up to three (3) million US dollars turnover, while micro enterprises have up to ten (10) staff members and one hundred (100,000) US dollar turnover. The European States traditionally have their own definition of what constitutes small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs). For instance, the traditional definition in Germany limits Small and Medium Scale Enterprises to two hundred and fifty (250) employees while in Belgium it is limited to one hundred (100) employees. The European Union (EU) regulated the concept by categorizing enterprises with less than ten (10) employees as micro and those with fewer than fifty (50) employees as small while those with fewer than two hundred and fifty (250) employee as medium. According to 2010 document of the Central Bank of Nigeria, small scale enterprises are those enterprises that have a total asset base (excluding real estate) which is less than one million naira, and employing or recruiting less than fifty (50) full-time staffs. While medium scale enterprises are those enterprises that have a total asset base (excluding real estate) of less than fifty (50) million naira, and employing less than one hundred (100) full-time workers. The Small and Medium Industries Enterprises Investment Scheme (SMIEIS, 2005) defines SME as any enterprises with a maximum asset base of N200 million (excluding land and working capital) and with a number of staff employed not less than 10 or more than 300. Noteworthy is the fact that the definitions of SME above may not accommodate many small businesses, which may be known as micro-enterprises. According to National Policy on MSMEs, a micro enterprise is defined as an entity employing less than ten persons with less than five million Naira value of assets, while a small enterprise has 10 to 49 employees and between five and fifty million Naira assets, and then a medium enterprise employs 50

– 199 persons and posts assets worth of between N50 and N500 million (Ibor, Offiong and Mendie, 2017). The Policy defines MSMEs based on the dual perspective of employment and assets (excluding land and buildings). They believe that inflationary pressures make the employment based criterion more stable than the asset-based definition and where there is a conflict between the two, the employment-derived definition takes precedence. Small and medium have been identified differently by various individuals and organizations such that an enterprise that is considered small or medium in one place is seen differently in another; even within a country the definition changes over time. So far there is no unified definition of SMEs, however, the basic definitional parameters remain the same; they include number of employees, asset base, turnover and financial strength among others. Therefore, there is no generally accepted definition of a small scale enterprise because the classification of businesses into large scale, medium scale or small scale is highly subjective; as such what may be a working definition of small-scale business in one place may refer to a large-scale in another place or country. It may even be more difficult to draw a line between small scale and medium scale business as they are often lumped together as micro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs). 244 In their recent pursuit of economic progress, the developing countries have generally come to recognize that the MSME sector may well be the main driving force for growth, due to its potential to providing entrepreneurial resources and employment opportunities (Hu, 2012). Rutendo (2016) affirms that almost every country that has achieved major economic growth had to do that on the platform of MSMEs. China, South Korea and Malaysia are examples of economies which have used MSMEs development as a catalyst for their economic development. Asikhia (2010) recognizes MSMEs as catalysts to the socio economic growth and development of any country's economy, and they are veritable agency for the achievement of macroeconomic objectives in terms of employment generation at low investment cost and development of entrepreneurial capabilities, stopping rural urban migration, promoting indigenous technology, local resource utilization, and poverty alleviation. Tambunan (2008) notes that MSMEs play a crucial role in economic development, as they are the main source of employment generation and output growth, both in developing as well as in developed countries. It is a general belief that MSMEs in developing nations have potential to enhance income redistribution (reducing income inequality), employment creation, poverty reduction and export growth as well as

development of entrepreneurship, industry and the rural economy. Meanwhile Kachembere (2011) acknowledges that MSMEs play very important role in promoting grassroots economic growth and equitable sustainable development. He is of the opinion that although it is believed that high rates of economic growth is expected to foster socio-economic development and poverty reduction; it is however, dependent on the quality of growth, which consist of the composition of growth, its spread and distribution and most importantly, the degree of sustainability. Hence, it becomes imperative to understand various factors responsible for quality growth through the route of MSMEs. In US, MSME enterprises called foundation enterprises are the core of the country's industrial base and account for more than 99 percent of U.S. businesses. Similarly, in Japanese economy, the contribution of small or medium-sized enterprises is more than 99% of total business (Pandya, 2012). This resulted in employment for majority of the population and accounted for a large proportion of economic output. Pandya (2012) further points out that even though most of the MSMEs are not as well known as Japan's giants, but they play significant role as the backbone of the service sector and support as an essential part of the manufacturing and especially as strong export supply chain. According to the World Bank report, MSMEs in the People Republic of China (PRC) accounted for 99.9% of the total number of businesses, employing 84% of the nation's workforce, and responsible for 71% of total sales (World Bank, 2017). MSMEs in Nigeria according to Oba and Onuoha (2013) have performed below expectation. , The poor performance of the sector has added to the high rate of unemployment, poverty, and low standard of living in the country. They further stated that although MSMEs provide seventy percent (70%) industrial sector and sixty percent (60%) of agricultural sector employment it only account for ten (10%) – fifteen percent (15%) of the total industrial output with a capacity utilization of over thirty percent (30%). While Eniola (2014) adds that micro, small and medium scale Enterprises in Nigeria has accounted for over 90% of Nigerian business, 95% of formal manufacturing activity and 70% of industrial businesses, but in spite of this dominance, their contribution to the GDP is below 5%. The results of the study according to Eniola (2014) show that several policies directed at MSMEs development did not stand the test of time due to administrative bottlenecks which constraints the sector from deriving maximum benefits from them. Olowe, Moradeyo and Babalola (2013) supporting this, agree that the contribution of MSMEs to Nigeria economy has not been heavily felt,

according to them many MSMEs in Nigeria do not reach the growth stage of their life cycle due to lack of access to finance. This Olowe, et al (2013) believe is because MSMEs are strongly constrained in accessing the needed capital required for growth and expansion, with nearly half of MSMEs in developing countries suffering the same fate. John-Akamelu and Muogbo (2018) examined the role of small and medium enterprises in poverty eradication in Nigeria. The result of the study revealed that small and medium enterprises provided employment opportunities, training ground, and optimal utilization of local resources. The study concluded that a good development strategy if employed by these industrialists will grow to large-scale capital intensive firms. The study recommends that MSMEs should source their loans from the financial institutions where interest rates are low.

2.6 Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology Use

In recent years, digital channels and e-commerce have facilitated rural CMSMEs. Alam and Dey (2022) discovered that CMSMEs participating in online commerce or digital finance demonstrate enhanced growth performance. The incorporation of ICT not only improves efficiency but also promotes environmental sustainability (Rahman & Nahar, 2020). The CMSME industry in India is bolstered by efforts like the MUDRA plan and Common Service Centres (CSCs), which facilitate digital access and financial inclusion (MeitY, 2020). Insights can be gleaned for Bangladesh regarding digital integration and service provision.

2.7 Financial Access and Institutional Support

Restricted access to capital is a significant impediment encountered by CMSMEs in Bangladesh. Khan and Quader (2020) assert that CMSMEs encounter substantial collateral demands, obstacles in informal lending, and insufficient credit guarantee programs. Ahmed and Karim (2021) advocate for the enhancement of microfinance institutions and CMSME-oriented banking initiatives to advance financial inclusion.

2.8 CMSMEs During the COVID-19 Crisis

The pandemic presented a significant risk to CMSMEs. Munshi et al. (2024) indicate that CMSMEs experienced supply chain problems, liquidity deficiencies, and declining market demand. Policy interventions, such as stimulus packages, tax alleviation, and digital marketing education, were essential for recovery (Haque & Habib, 2022).

2.9 Comparative Regional Insights

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, CMSMEs provide over 25% to GDP and employ over 7.8 million individuals (Islam et al., 2021). The industry is essential in mitigating rural-urban migration by creating local employment opportunities. Diverse governmental and non-governmental programs, including SME Foundation efforts, have facilitated access to financing and market connections.

Bangladesh has promoted rural CMSMEs through the Bangladesh Bank's Refinance Scheme for mini firms and women investors. Institutions like BSCIC (Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation) constantly providing training, infrastructure, and policy guideline to rural firms (Islam et al., 2020). additionally technological, monetary inclusion projects have assisted increased access to investing and markets for countryside entrepreneurs.

India

India's rural economy derives substantial advantages from MSMEs, which represent over 90% of all firms and provide employment for around 111 million individuals (Government of India, 2020). Proposals like MUDRA Yojana and Startup India dramatically changed affordability and access to finance. It also facilitated the startup aid in countryside areas, women and marginalized groups empowerment. (Dey & Bhowmick, 2022).

The People's Republic of China

Township and village enterprises (TVEs) in China type of countryside MSMEs have commonly been significant in rural development, integrated industrialization ,poverty alleviation, and the inclusion of rural labors into the national economy. These institutions responsible for more than 30% of the GDP throughout the era of transformation (Zhang, 2020). The government has equipped them with logistic framework and supply chain integration (Liu et al., 2019).

Kenya

Kenya composed of CMSMEs in approximately 98% of all enterprises and come up with around 33.8% to the GDP. They are a crucial stimulant for innovation, specifically in value-added agricultural goods. (Mungai & Njeru, 2021). Initiatives like the Youth Enterprise Development Fund and Uwezo Fund have assisted the formation of rural firms by young generation and female population.

Indonesia

Rural CMSMEs in Indonesia, especially in food techniques and handcrafting, strengthen local economic sustenance. These institutions composed of 99.9% of all startup and put into use over 97% of the workers (Sari & Nugroho, 2021). Inventiveness such as Kredit Usaha Rakyat (KUR) promote the provision of assisting finance to rural entrepreneurs.

Brazil

In Brazil, rural CMSMEs mainly focus in agro-processing and tourism. National policy such as PRONAF (National Program for Strengthening Family Agriculture) contributed financial assistance, resulting in improved productivity and sustainability in rural areas (Silva & Santos, 2020).

Ethiopia

CMSMEs in Ethiopia have been pivotal in building inclusive livelihoods in rural regions via agribusiness and leather processing. The Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) considered small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as stimulant for industrial improvement and generation of increased rural employment (Tessema & Abebe, 2020).

Vietnam:

The government of Vietnamese has extensively insisted the development of CMSMEs through policies that foster rural industrial clusters. Infrastructure development, incorporation of various trainings, and export assistance have resulted rural enterprises to flourish and into global businesses (Nguyen & Freeman, 2009).

Worldwide, rural development procedures undeniably acknowledge the pivotal significance of CMSMEs. Altogether the precise processes differ, widespread characteristics integrate financial inclusion, innovation inducement, digital incorporation, and assistive policy measures. Insights from different nations promote comprehensive measures. Danish and Smith (2021) that CMSMEs in Pakistan promoted rural advancement through allotment in local infrastructure and earning levels. In India, Common Service Centres (CSCs) strengthen rural entrepreneurship by introducing digital inclusion (Singh & Vashisht, 2022). The CMSME industry in India is getting bigger by initiatives like the MUDRA plan and Common Service Centres (CSCs), which facilitate digital access and financial inclusion (MeitY, 2020). Insights can be derived for Bangladesh regarding technological integration and activities. In various developing and incipient economies, CMSMEs serve a critical function in modification of rural economies. They expedite employment creation, skill amplification, impelling of oppressed groups, and local value incorporation, serving them required for the attainment of inclusive, imperishable, renewable, supportable unending worthwhile rural development.

2.10 CMSMEs and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG Linkages

- SDG 1 (No Poverty): CMSMEs develop living and multiply family earning. (Rahman, 2019).
- SDG 5 (Gender Equality): Female- led CMSMEs play a crucial character in declining gender disparity (Asad et al., 2013).
- SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): These are indispensable for creating high-yielding work chances.
- SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure): CMSMEs bolster transformation and encourage local industrialization.
- SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities): CMSMEs alleviate agrarian-city income discrepancies and upgrade inclusivity.

Barriers

Barriers to Contribution Despite their potential, CMSMEs often face constraints including:

- A. Difficulty to procure traditional economic funds. (Beck et al., 2005)
- B. Inadequate framework and business linkages (Chowdhury et al., 2013) restricted adoption of technological support and pioneering spirit (Tambunan, 2008).

2.11 Literature Gaps

- Deficient linear Data: Most findings are fragmentary, impaired discernment into enduring influence.
- Gender-Disarticulated examination: Limited research on gender-specific challenges in rural CMSMEs.
- Digitization: The impression of digital tools on rural CMSMEs persists unfathomed.
- Eco friendly measurements: Few data examine how CMSMEs attribute to environmental characteristics of SDGs.

2.12 Conceptual Framework

CMSMEs indicate enterprises that differ in structure and organization, typically classified according to staff count, annual revenue, and asset valuation.. According to the World Bank (2020), micro-enterprises typically employ fewer than 10 people, small enterprises employ 10–49, and medium enterprises 50–249. In Bangladesh, the definition aligns with the Industrial Policy 2022 and Bangladesh Bank guidelines, where CMSMEs are primarily informal and often family-run. Theoretical Underpinnings The literature on CMSMEs is underpinned by theories of economic development, particularly the role of entrepreneurship in endogenous growth models (Romer, 1986). The framework highlights how innovation and knowledge diffusion from CMSMEs contribute to regional development and the broader economy.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This approach delineates the procedures for executing a multiple regression analysis to assess the influence of CMSME (Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) activities on rural economic empowerment. The research will utilize a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative designs through a cross-sectional survey to gather primary data. A systematic questionnaire will be employed to collect responses from rural recipients of CMSME initiatives.

A survey of CMSME stakeholders was done using a questionnaire to determine the contribution of CMSMEs to rural economic empowerment.

Inferential statistics showed a relationship between dependent and independent variables.

In this study, the term 'rural economy' denotes the economy of industrially undeveloped regions as defined by industrial policy-2022.

3.2 Population and Sample Size Determination

Target Population

The target population includes individuals involved in rural CMSME activities, such as small business owners and other stakeholders.

Sampling Technique

A stratified random sample technique will be employed to guarantee representation across several divisions and categories, including gender, business type, and location.

Sample Size Calculation

The ideal sample size can be determined using **Cochran's formula**:

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2 P(1 - p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

- $Z = 1.96$ (for 95% confidence level)
- $p = 0.5$ (assumed proportion for maximum variability)
- $e = 0.05$ (desired margin of error)

$$n_0 = (1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1 - 0.5) / (0.05)^2 = 384$$

Using the formula for multiple regression analysis:

$$N = 50 + 8m, N = 50 + 8m$$

where **m** is the number of independent variables (8 in this case).

$$N = 50 + 8(18) = 194$$

Thus, a **minimum sample size of 194 respondents** is required. However, a target sample of 384 **CMSME owners/managers** is quite adequate.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

- **Primary Data:**
 - A structured survey questionnaire aligned with the study variables.
 - Respondents: CMSME owners/managers from selected rural regions.
 - Data collection: **Face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, or online surveys.**
- **Secondary Data:**
 - Reports from SME financing institutions.

- CMSMEs impact on rural economic empowerment related publications (Government publications and rural economic development reports, etc.).
- SDG progress reports related to SMEs.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data will be analyzed using:

1. **Descriptive Statistics** (Mean, Standard Deviation, Frequency, **Correlation Analysis**).
2. **Inferential (Multiple Regression Analysis** using **Ordinary Least Squares (OLS)** to determine the impact of independent variables on rural economic empowerment.

3.5 Calculations

Regression Model Setup

Table 3 Regression Model Setup

Variable	Measurement Items (Survey Questions)	Scale Used
Dependent Variable (Y): Rural Economic Empowerment	Q21	1-4 Likert Scale
Independent Variables (X)		
X1: Job Creation	Q1	1-5 Likert Scale
X2: Income Generation	Q2	1-5 Likert Scale
X3: Access to Finance	Q5, Q6	1-5 Scale (Avg. of Q5 & Q6)
X4: Gender Equality Promotion	Q8, Q3	1-5 Scale (Avg. of Q8 & Q3)
X5: Skill Development	Q9	1-5 Likert Scale
X6: Eco-Friendly Practices	Q10	1-5 Likert Scale
X7: Good Governance	Q11	1-5 Likert Scale
X8: Technology Adoption	Q12	1-5 Likert Scale
X9: Market Access	Q13	1-5 Likert Scale
X10: Financial Literacy	Q14	1-5 Likert Scale
X11: Social Capital & Networking	Q15	1-5 Likert Scale
X12: Business Diversification	Q16	1-5 Likert Scale
X13: Government Support & Policy Awareness	Q4	1-5 Likert Scale
X14: Supply Chain Efficiency	Q17	1-5 Likert Scale
X15: Resilience to Economic Shocks	Q18	1-5 Likert Scale
X16: Wage Equality	Q7	1-5 Likert Scale
Control Variable (X16): Infrastructure	Q19, Q20	1-5 Scale (Avg. of Q19 & Q20)

$\beta_1, \beta_2 \dots \dots \beta_8$ = Regression coefficients that measure the effect of each independent variable on Y.

ϵ = Error term (accounts for unobserved factors)

Multiple regression model is used in this research:

$$Y = \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + \dots + \beta_8x_8 + \epsilon$$

- **If R² is high**, the model explains a strong relationship between CMSME factors and rural empowerment.

3.6 Scope of the Study

- **Geographical Scope:** Focuses on **rural CMSMEs** and their contribution to SDG-related progress.
- **Sectoral Scope:** Covers **manufacturing, agriculture, retail, and service industries**.
- **Conceptual Scope:** Examines CMSME business factors influencing **rural economic empowerment and SDG goals**.

3.7 Research Limitations

- Rural economic empowerment depends on multiple factors, including government-supported initiatives, private contributions, foreign aid, remittance, rural infra-structure development and the impact of large industries. This research exclusively examines government-supported initiatives (CMSME) and overlooks other contributors to rural economic empowerment due to time constraints.
- **Sample Representation:** May not fully represent **all rural CMSMEs**.
- **Self-Reported Bias:** Respondents may provide socially desirable answers.
- **Limited External Validity:** Findings may not apply to **urban CMSMEs**.
- **Time Constraints:** Cross-sectional analysis may not capture **long-term impacts**.

3.8 Further Scope

This study concentrates exclusively on government-supported programs, specifically CMSMEs, as a catalyst for rural economic empowerment, while recognising that rural development is shaped by a wider array of factors. This encompasses private sector investment, foreign aid, remittances, rural infrastructure development, and the operations of large companies, all of which were excluded from this research due to temporal limitations. Subsequent research could broaden the analysis to incorporate these factors, providing a more thorough comprehension of the interactions that influence rural economies. This research may also examine long-term consequences,

regional disparities, and the varying affects on particular demographic groups, yielding essential insights for more inclusive and cohesive policy formulation.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

- **Informed Consent:** All participants will be informed about the study’s purpose and confidentiality.
- **Confidentiality:** Responses will be anonymized.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Respondents can withdraw at any stage.
- **Ethical Approval:** The study will seek approval from relevant institutional review boards.

3.10 Contribution to SDG Goals

This study aligns with several **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and provides insights into how CMSMEs can help achieve them.

Table 4 Contribution to SDG Goals

SDG Goal	CMSME Contribution Based on Study Variables
SDG 1: No Poverty	Increased job creation and higher wages improve rural livelihoods.
SDG 5: Gender Equality	Encouraging women’s leadership and fair wages contributes to equality.
SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth	CMSMEs provide employment and skill development opportunities.
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Investing in sustainable infrastructure (solar energy, digital access) supports long-term growth.
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	Workforce inclusion of marginalized communities fosters equal economic participation.
SDG 13: Climate Action	Eco-friendly practices like waste management and renewable energy adoption promote sustainability.

3.11 Final Thoughts

This approach combines rural economic empowerment with corporate strategies centered on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through the implementation of gender-inclusive policies, enhancement of financial accessibility, and adoption of environmentally sustainable practices, CMSMEs can promote sustainable rural development while contributing to global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4 Results and Discussions

The study investigates the contribution of Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) to inclusive growth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) via a detailed questionnaire segmented into three parts: fundamental data regarding entrepreneurs, 21 closed-ended inquiries concerning the present condition of CMSMEs, and 7 open-ended questions addressing challenges and opportunities. The results offer insights into the current status and future prospects of CMSMEs in strengthening the rural economy through the examination of both quantitative and qualitative data.

4.1 Survey Results

Workforce Size Distribution among CMSMEs

The research indicates that 29.9% of the surveyed businesses employ over 15 persons. Conversely, 24.6% own only 1–4 employees, signifying a substantial fraction of micro-scale enterprises. The remaining share is allocated among different worker groups, emphasizing the varied scale within the CMSMEs. This signifies the structural diversity of CMSMEs, encompassing cottage to medium-scale firms.

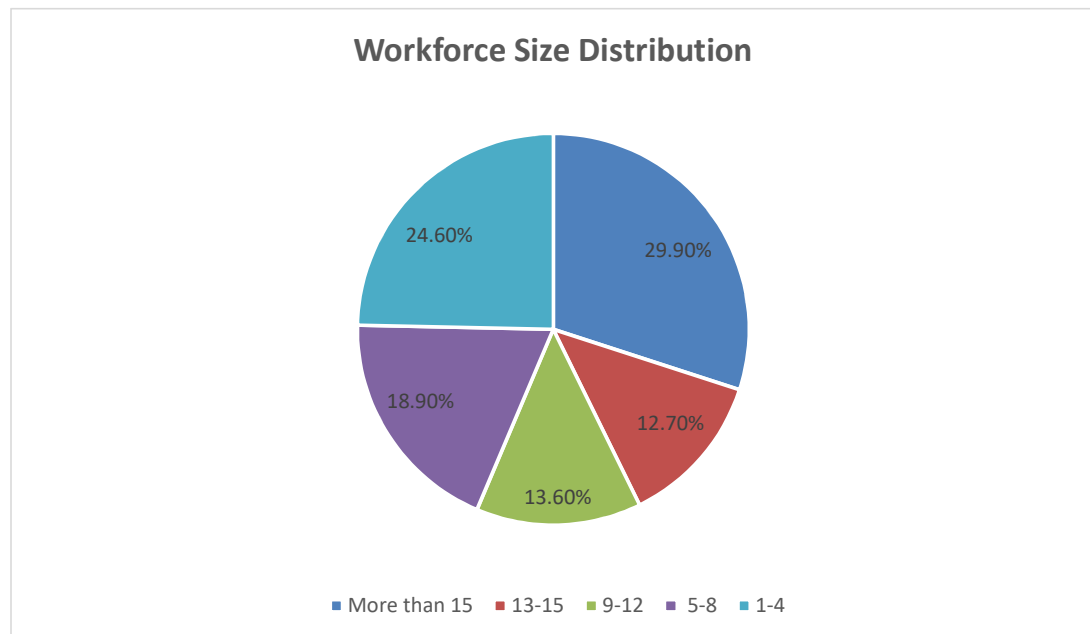


Figure 1 Workforce Size Distribution among CMSMEs

Minimum Daily Wage Levels of Employees

The findings reveal that 37.8% and 15.3% of employees earn a daily wage between BDT 300 to 499 and less than BDT 300 respectively. Only 4.5% receive an amount of BDT 900 or more. This highlights the prevalence of low-wage employment across CMSMEs. This leads to high employee turnover, reduced motivation, and limited productivity. Moreover, low wages often reflect financial constraints faced by enterprises themselves.

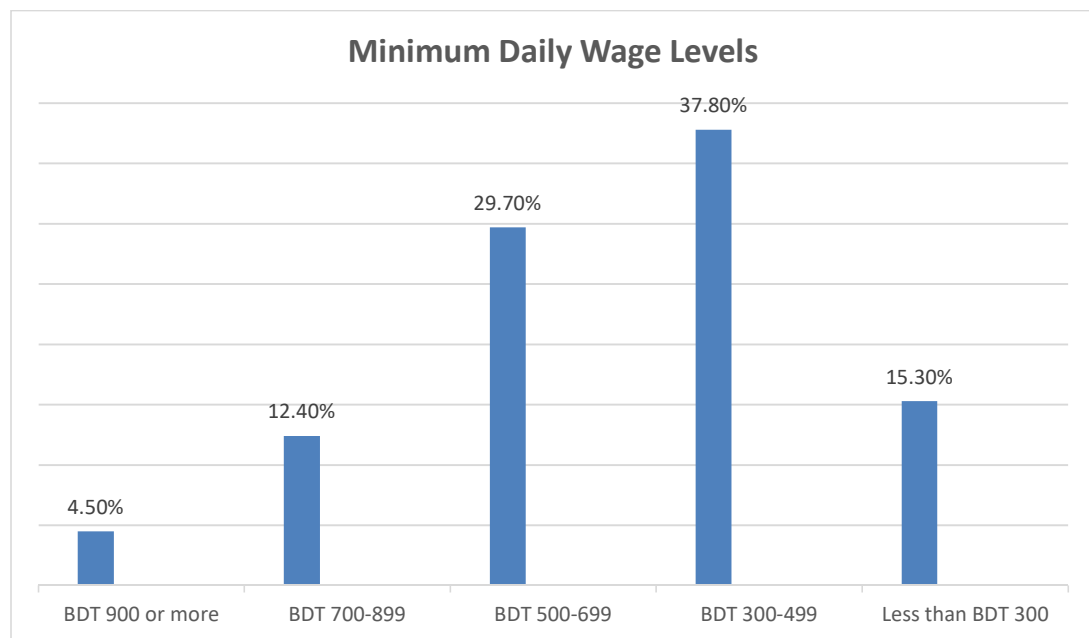


Figure 2 Minimum Daily Wage Levels

Inclusion of Marginalized Groups in the Workforce

Only 13.4% of enterprises report having 50% or more employees from marginalized communities, while 30.6% include less than 10%. Even 27.5% of the CMSMEs have no inclusion at all. This data indicates that the inclusion of third-gender, disabled persons, and marginalized groups remains significantly limited across the CMSMEs.

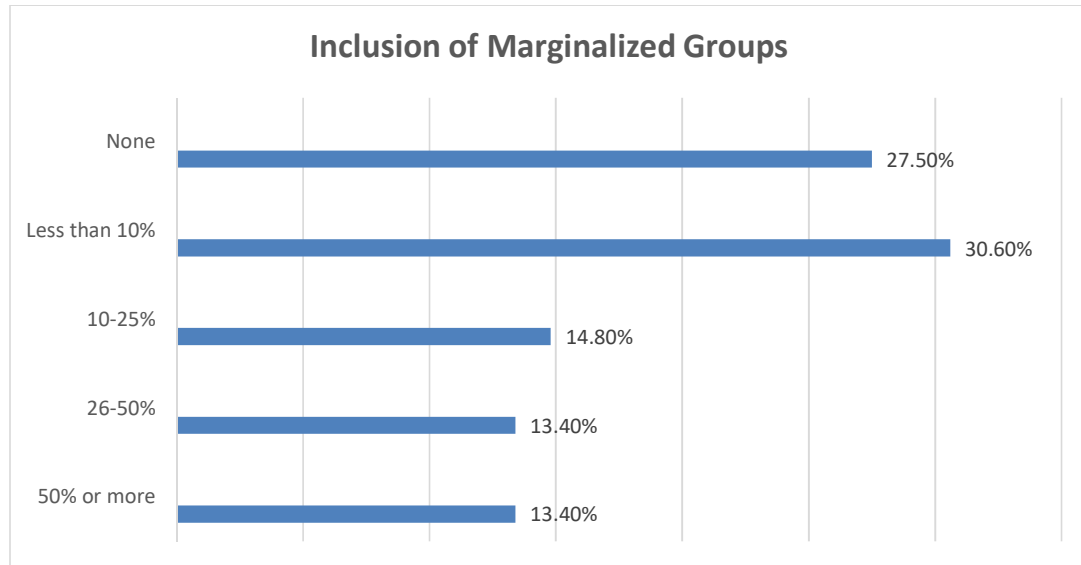


Figure 3 Inclusion of Marginalized Groups

Awareness Level about Government Policies and SME Support

22.7% of respondents reported being fully aware of and actively utilizing government policies and SME support programs, while 34.9% indicated they are well aware, and 22.2% are moderately aware. However, 3.6% of CMSMEs have no awareness at all. This lack of awareness hinders the growth of CMSMEs, as they may miss financial incentives, grants, training programs, etc. provided by government organizations.

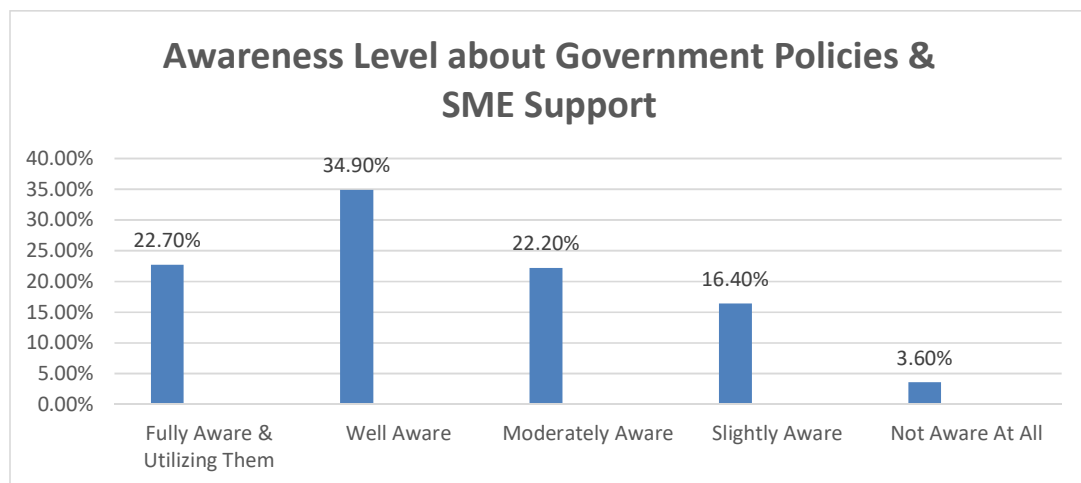


Figure 4 Awareness Level about Government Policies & SME Support

Ease of Accessing Finance for Enterprise Growth

The data reveals access to finance is perceived differently, with 38.3% finding it "Easy" and 36.4% "Difficult," while 13.7% and 10.6% described it as "Very Easy" and "Very Difficult," respectively. A small 0.7% of the respondents consider it "Impossible". The disparities in perceptions may be caused by variances in business size, location, financial literacy, etc.

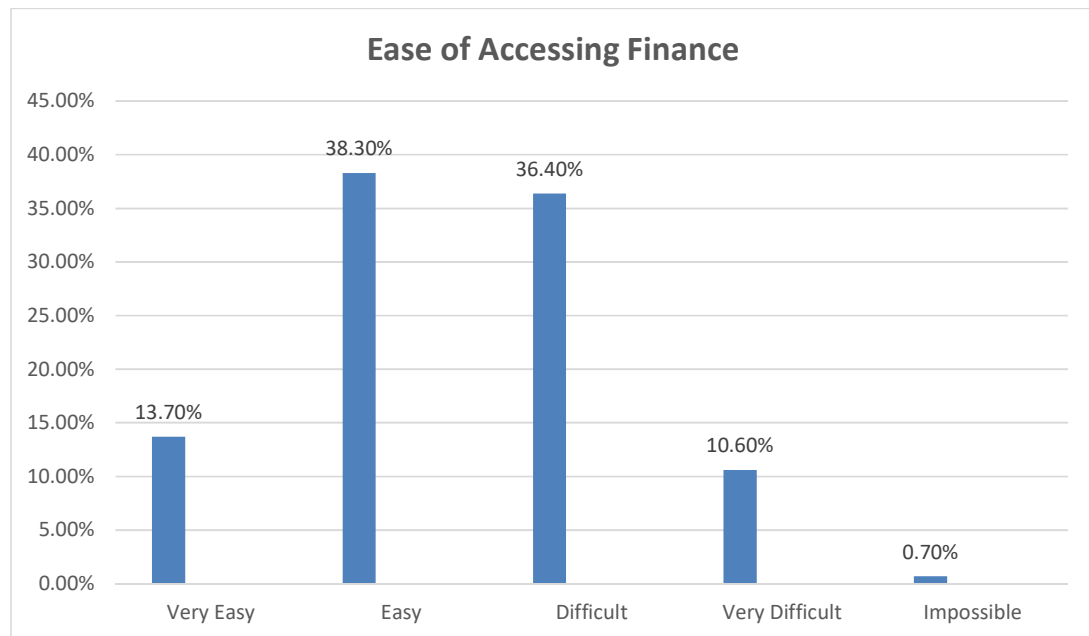


Figure 5 Ease of Accessing Finance

Engagement with Government and Institutional Financing Programs

The study shows that 40.4% of respondents are aware of financing programs but have not used them, indicating a significant gap between awareness and utilization. Meanwhile, 29.9% have benefited from such programs. However, 13.9% are aware but disengaged, 12.9% are unaware, while 2.6% lack both understanding and awareness. These findings highlight the need for better communication and simplified procedures to ensure more CMSMEs not only know about but also benefit from available financial support programs.

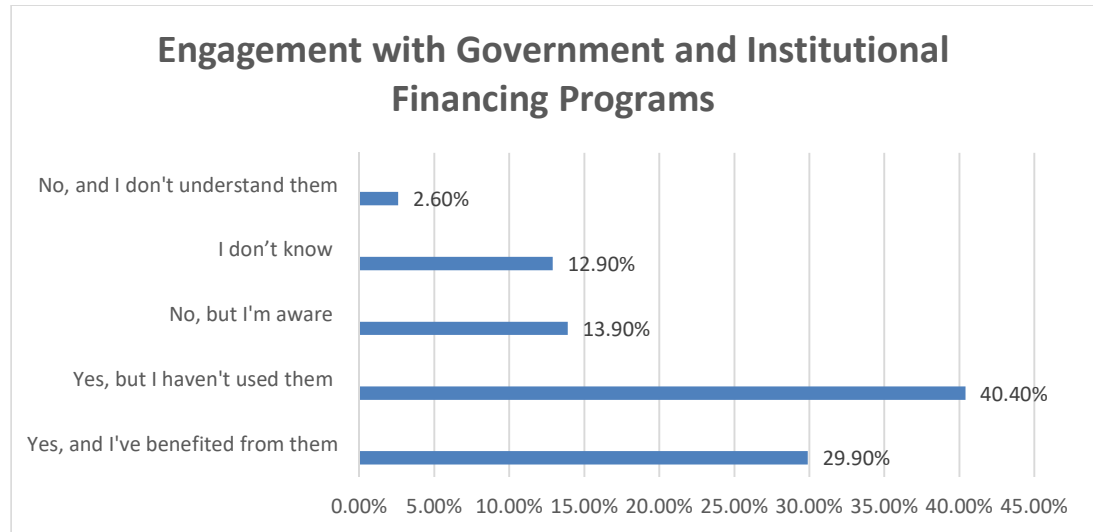


Figure 6 Engagement with Government and Institutional Financing Programs

Organizational Commitment to Equal Wage Structures

The study reveals that 32.9% of respondents strongly agree and the same percentage agree that their organizations maintain equal pay irrespective of gender, disabled persons, and marginalized groups. However, 2.4% strongly disagreed, 13.9% disagreed, and 20.1% remained neutral, indicating that gaps still exist to some extent. These mixed perceptions suggest that while many CMSMEs are moving toward equal wage structures, the progress is not yet uniform. Targeted awareness programs and strict policies must be introduced to ensure consistent and inclusive wage structures across the sector.

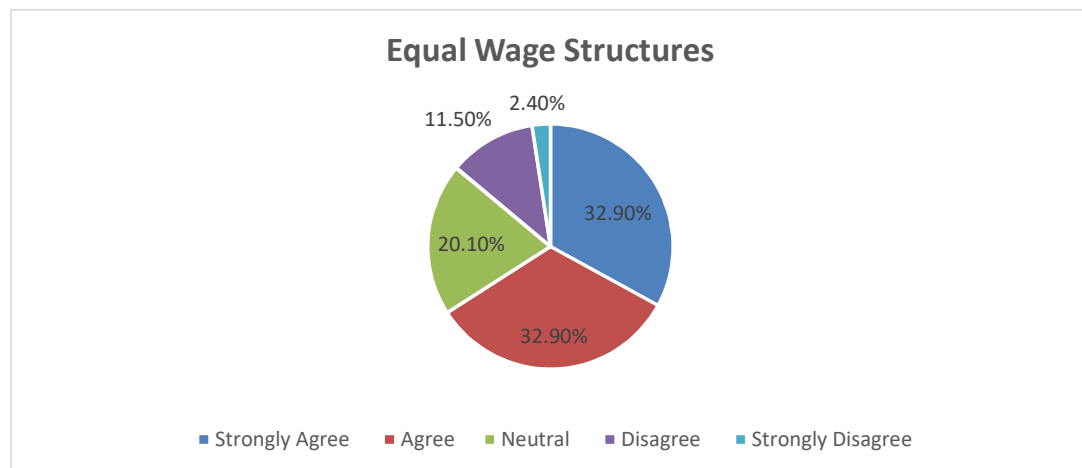


Figure 7 Organizational Commitment to Equal Wage Structures

Evaluation of Women's Participation in CMSMEs

According to the study, 24.6% of respondents rated women's participation as "Excellent," while 44.7% rated it "Good." 22.9% of respondents rated it as "Average." However, 7.5% rated it "Poor" or "Very Poor," revealing that gender inclusion is not yet uniform across the sector. The overall scenario is in a positive trend, which indicates the growing participation of women in the sector.

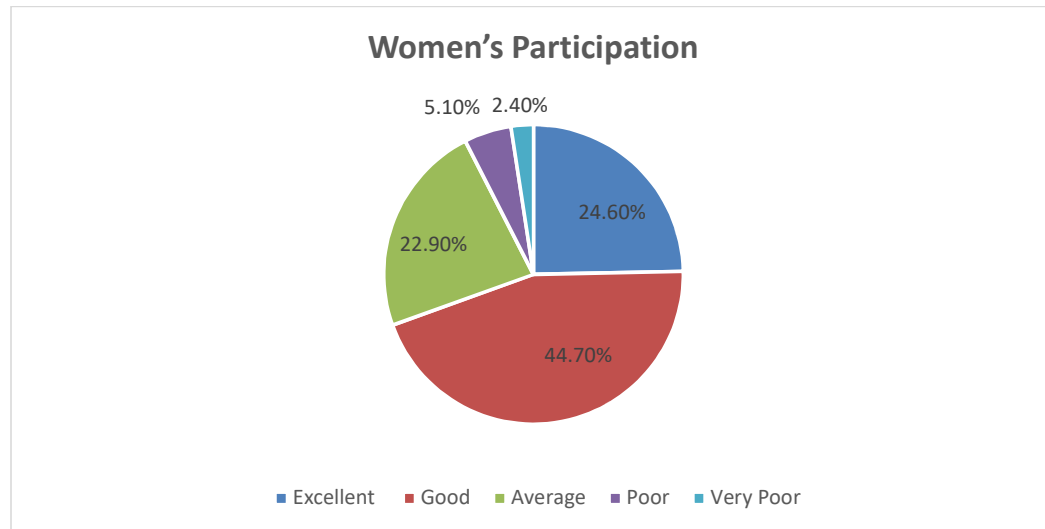


Figure 8 Evaluation of Women's Participation in CMSMEs

Frequency of Skill Development Programs Organized

The research reveals that only 29% of CMSMEs regularly organize skill development programs or trainings, while 33.6% do so occasionally, and a 10.5% rarely or never provide training. This indicates that capacity-building is not yet a strategic priority for many CMSMEs. This has been impacting employee productivity, innovation, and competitiveness.

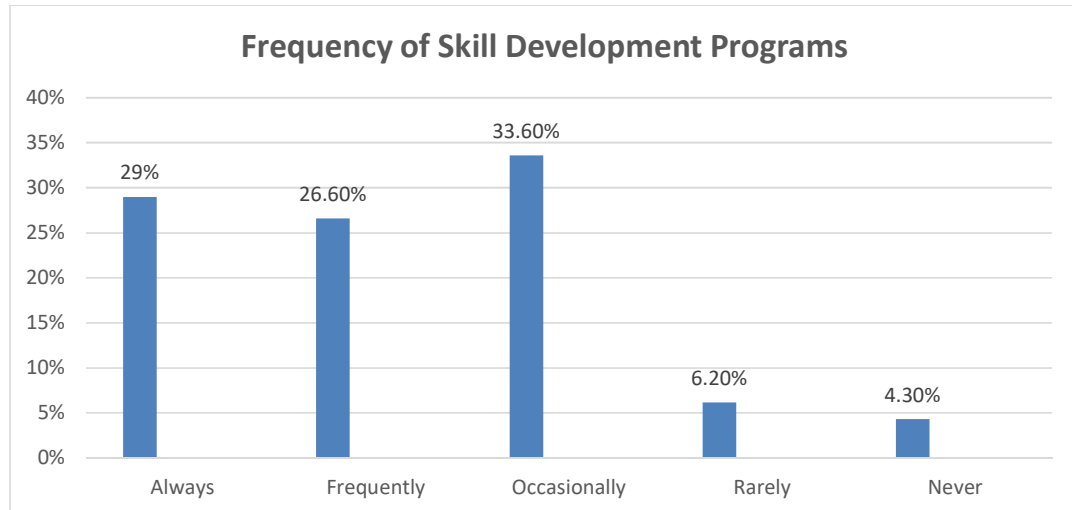


Figure 9 Frequency of Skill Development Programs

Adoption of Environmentally Friendly Business Practices

The majority of CMSMEs (75.80%) ranked their environmental practices as "Good" or "Excellent," indicating a growing focus on sustainability, though 3.30% reported "Poor" or "Very Poor" practices, likely due to limited resources, lack of expertise, etc. 20.6% of respondents rated it as "Average," which highlights the necessity of improvement in adoption of environmentally friendly business practices.

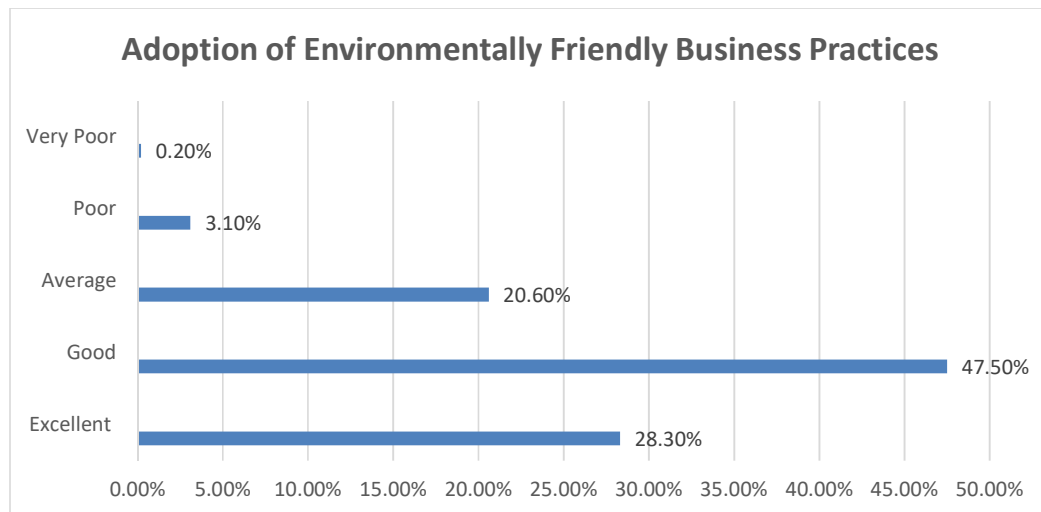


Figure 10 Adoption of Environmentally Friendly Business Practices

Quality of Operational and Management Practices

A large number of CMSMEs (50% "Good" and 28.90% "Excellent") rated their operational and managerial practices highly. However, 19.90% rank their practices as "average," indicating space for growth. These can be addressed with capacity-building programs, digital technologies, mentorship, etc.

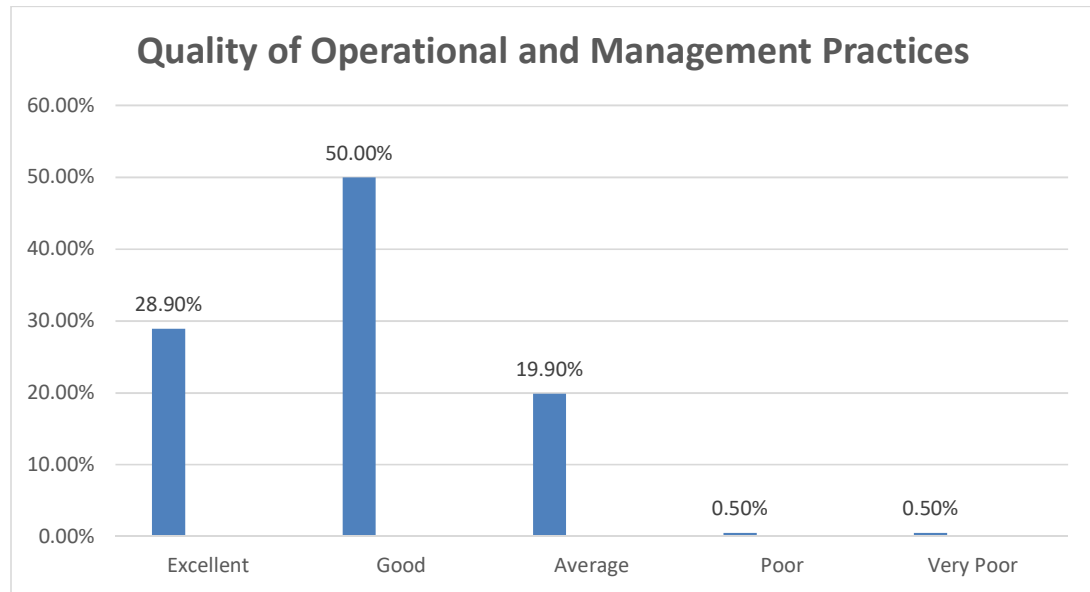


Figure 11 Quality of Operational and Management Practices

Extent of Digital Tool and Automation Usage

A sizable portion of respondents rated their digital adoption as "Good" (36.50%) or "Average" (33.10%), indicating progress but also room for growth. Many CMSMEs are gradually embracing digital technologies such as online marketing, e-commerce, online payment, real-time monitoring, cloud-based management systems, etc. However, some CMSMEs find it difficult to adopt digital tools and automation as they ranked it as "Poor" (9.4%) and "Very Poor" (3.9%).

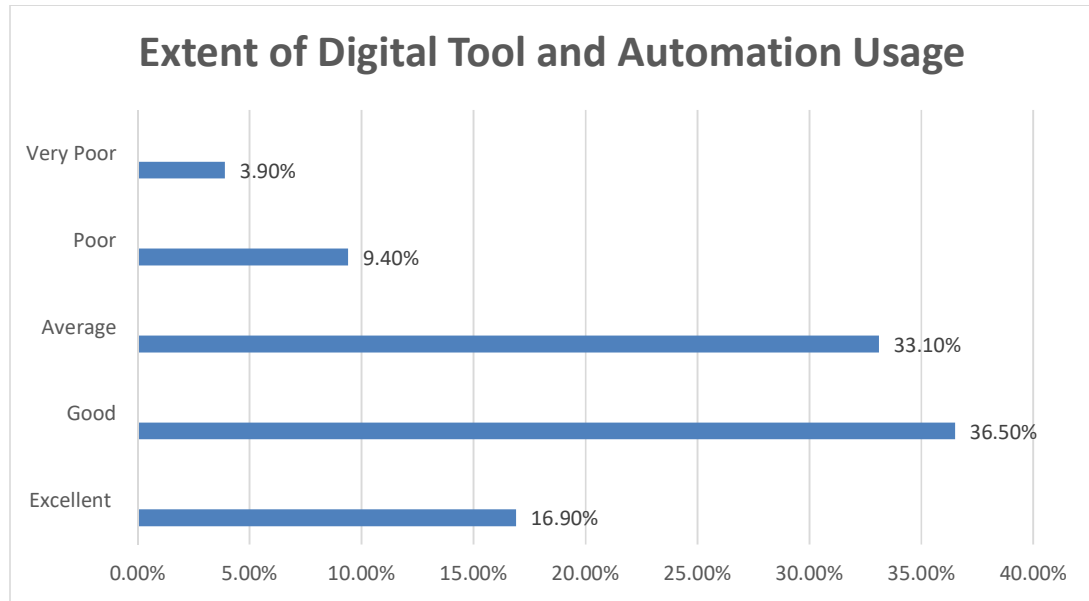


Figure 12 Extent of Digital Tool and Automation Usage

Accessibility to Local, National, and International Markets

Most organizations ranked their market accessibility as "Average" (37.40%) or "Good" (36.90%), indicating reasonable effectiveness in access to local, national, and international markets. Only 17.20% claimed "Excellent" access, showing substantial obstacles in expanding into larger, particularly overseas markets. These findings highlight the importance of export facilitation programs, trade support services, targeted marketing training, and other initiatives.

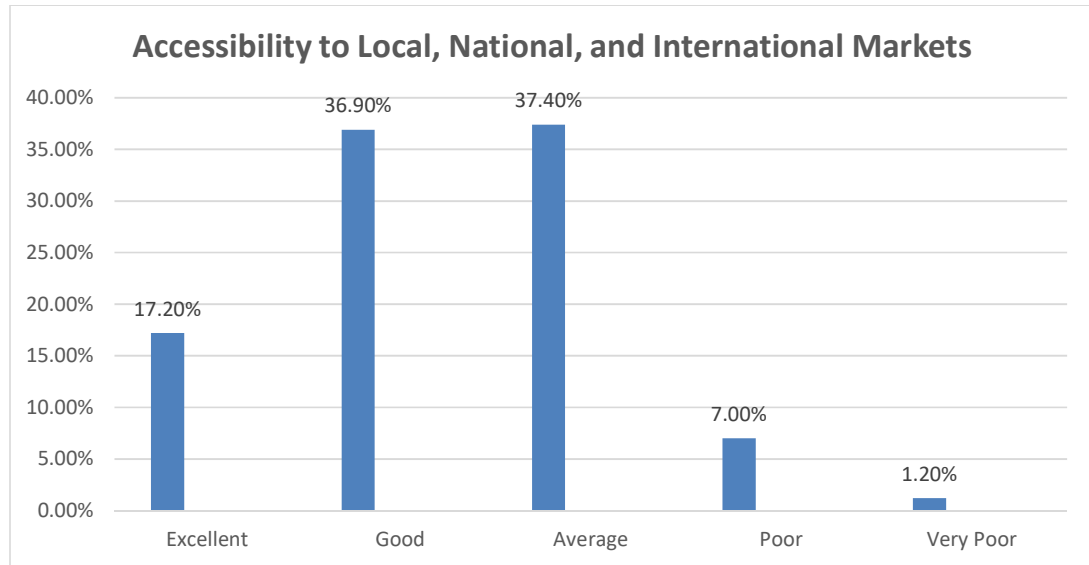


Figure 13 Accessibility to Local, National, and International Markets

Financial Management Skills of Entrepreneurs

The majority of entrepreneurs rate them as "Good" (41.30%) or "Average" (36%), while only 16.40% consider themselves "Excellent" in financial management skills. This suggests that while many business owners have a functional understanding of financial practices, there is a noticeable gap in strategic financial planning. Strengthening financial literacy through workshops, mentoring, and digital tools can empower CMSMEs to make more informed decisions, manage risks better, and pursue sustainable growth.

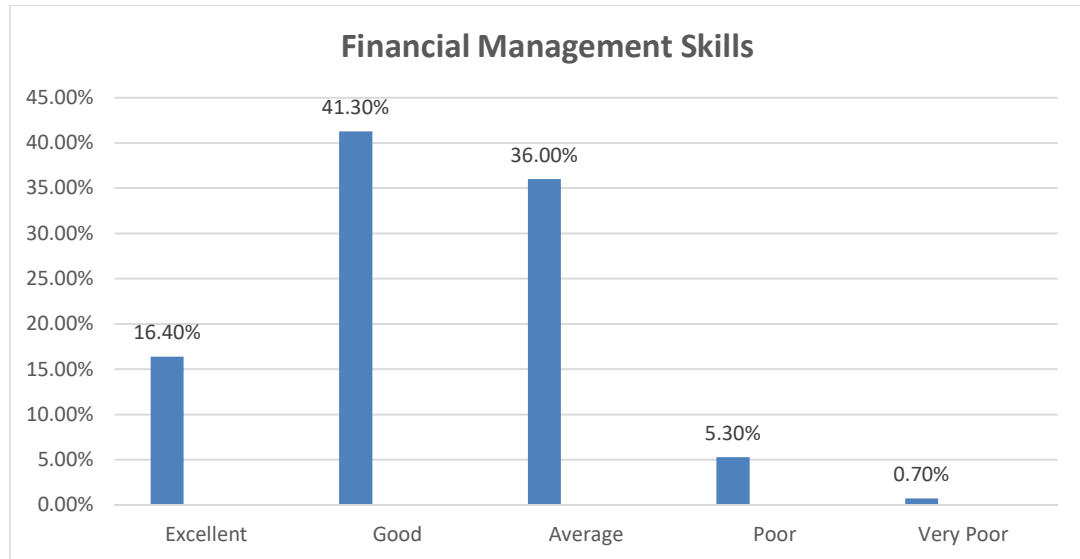


Figure 14 Financial Management Skills of Entrepreneurs

Importance of Networking in Business Growth

A significant amount of respondents (45.60% "Agree" and 33.10% "Strongly Agree") believe networking is crucial for business growth, while 16.10% are "Neutral," 4.10% "Disagree," and 1% "Strongly Disagree." This study highlights a strong consensus on the importance of networking for CMSMEs.

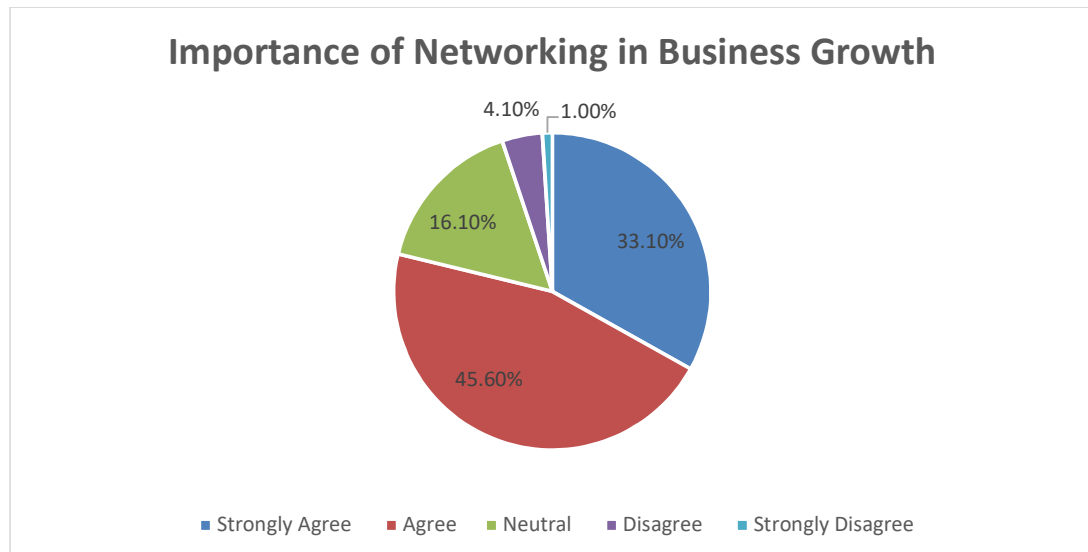


Figure 15 Importance of Networking in Business Growth

Approach to Product/Service Diversification for Risk Mitigation

The data indicates that CMSMEs predominantly adopt a strategy of diversification within local markets, with 48.40% categorized as "Average," reflecting their belief in the importance of having multiple products across various local markets to mitigate risks. A smaller yet significant portion, 17.80% and 19% in the "Excellent" and "Good" categories respectively, pursues broader diversification, including international markets, to further spread risk. Conversely, 11.10% and 3.40% of CMSMEs, falling under "Poor" and "Very Poor," likely have limited diversification, focusing on a single product or market, making them more vulnerable to market risks.

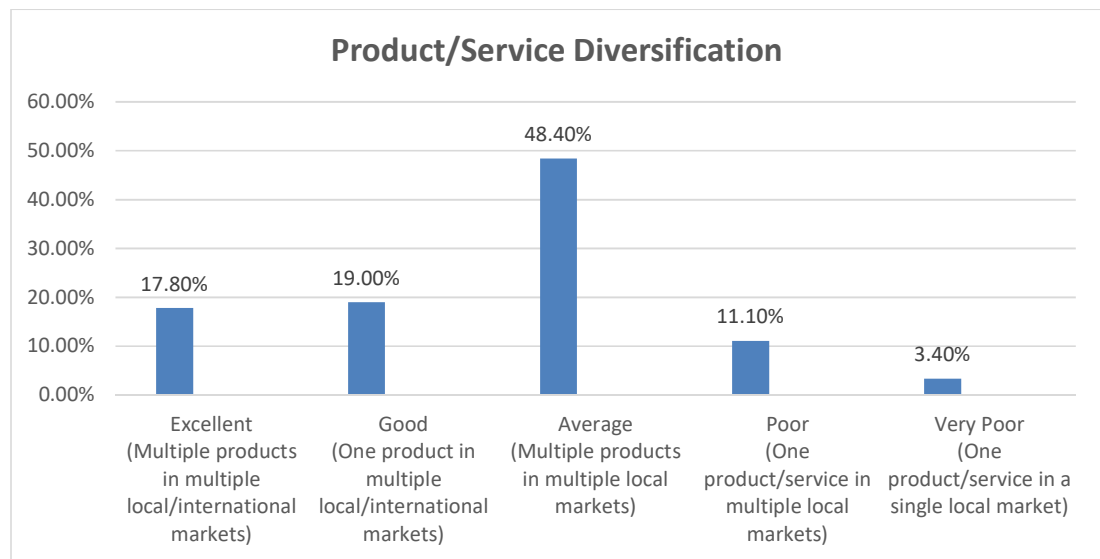


Figure 16 Approach to Product/Service Diversification for Risk Mitigation

Efficiency and Strength of Business Supply Chains

The bar chart shows that 38% of CMSMEs rate their supply chain efficiency as "Average," indicating adequacy but room for improvement, while 36.3% consider it "Good," reflecting effective performance. A notable 21.7% rate their supply chains as "Excellent," highlighting strong and efficient systems. On the contrary, only 2.4% and 1.5% of respondents classify their supply chains as "Poor" and "Very Poor," respectively, indicating a small minority face significant challenges. Overall, the data reflects a generally positive assessment of supply chain strength.

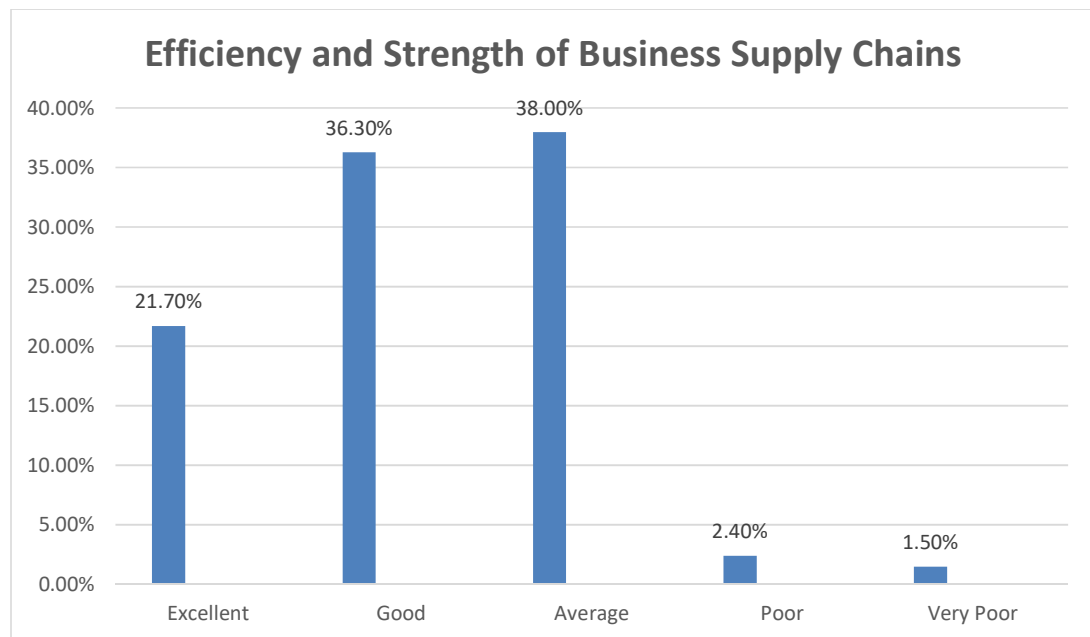


Figure 17 Efficiency and Strength of Business Supply Chains

Business Resilience to Economic Challenges

The data highlights that 43.1% of CMSMEs demonstrate strong operational practices rating them as "Good" (31.8%) or "Excellent" (11.3%) suggesting they handle challenges effectively. The majority of businesses, at 49.20%, rate their resilience as "Average," Conversely, 5.30% and 2.20% of CMSMEs fall into the "Poor" and "Very Poor" categories, respectively, indicating limited resilience, possibly due to resource constraints or other constraints.

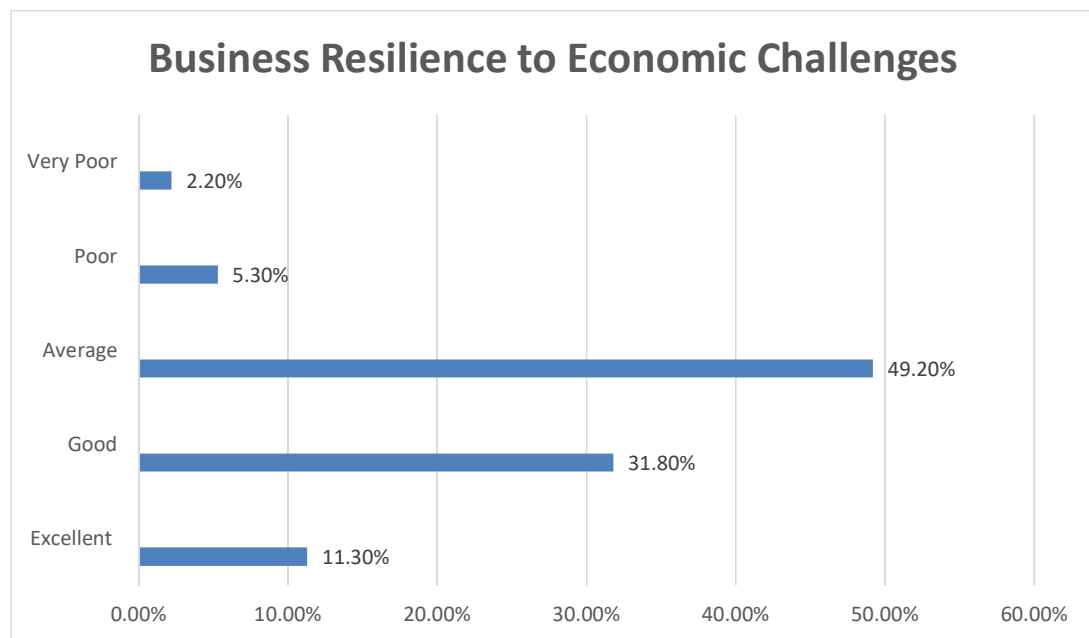


Figure 18 Business Resilience to Economic Challenges

Investment in Sustainable Infrastructure and Innovation

The bar chart shows how CMSMEs have invested in sustainable infrastructure and innovation. 34.10% of respondents fell into the highest investment category, "10-14%," suggesting that they allocate a moderate amount of their resources to sustainability. With 21% and 17.30%, respectively, the "5-9%" and "15-20%" categories show a significant level of allocation from numerous companies. On the other hand, only 9% of organizations invest "More than 20%," indicating a significant commitment, while 18.30% invest "Less than 5%," indicating a low allocation to sustainability. Although there are differences in the sector's level of commitment, the data shows that most

organizations allocate between 5% and 15% of their resources to sustainability and innovation.

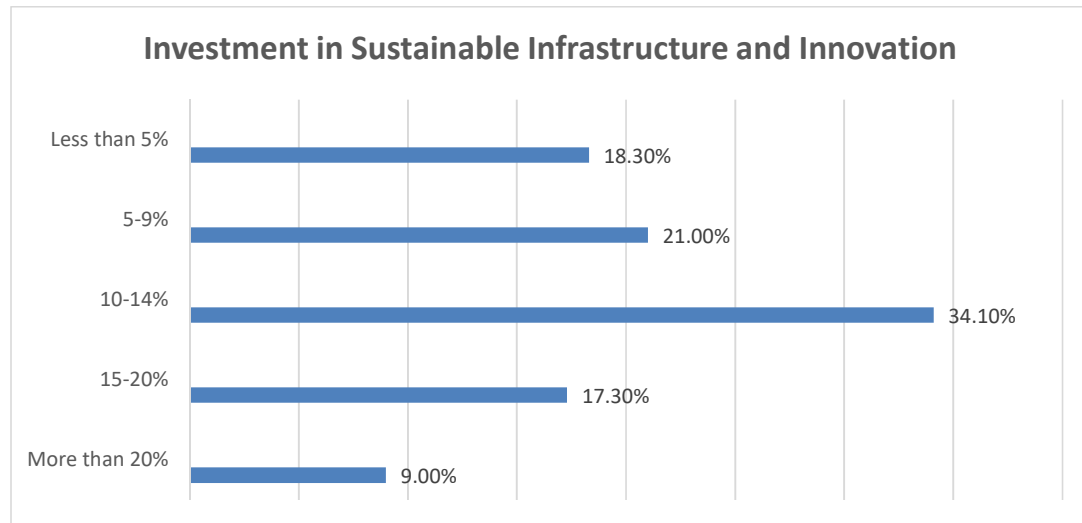


Figure 19 Investment in Sustainable Infrastructure and Innovation

Evaluation of Local Infrastructure and Utilities

The bar chart compares perceptions of local infrastructure and utilities across five categories. The "Good" category leads with 34.50%, showing that many respondents hold positive notion about local infrastructure and utilities. The "Average" group follows closely at 33.50%, indicating mixed thoughts. The "Excellent" category, with 19%, reflects strong satisfaction. In contrast, the "Poor" and "Very Poor" categories, at 8.70% and 4.10%, respectively show that only a tiny percentage of enterprises experience major issues with local infrastructure and utilities.

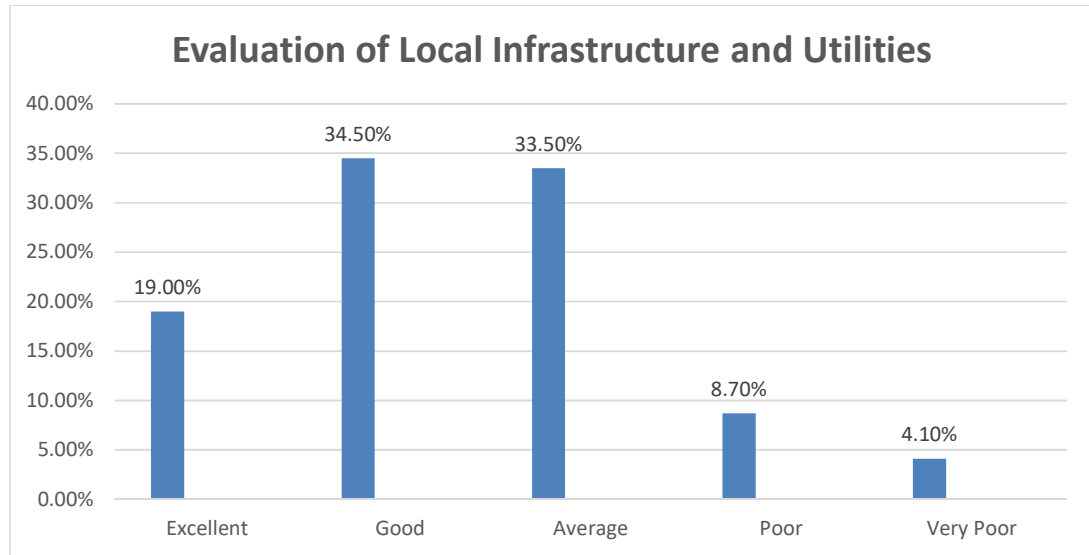


Figure 20 Evaluation of Local Infrastructure and Utilities

Perception of CMSME's Role in Rural Economic Empowerment

The pie chart shows strong support for CMSME's role in rural economic empowerment, with 67.46% agreeing and 30.38% strongly agreeing, totaling 97.84% approval. Only 2.16% disagree or strongly disagree, reflecting minimal opposition. This indicates a widespread, positive perception of CMSME's effectiveness in fostering rural economic empowerment.

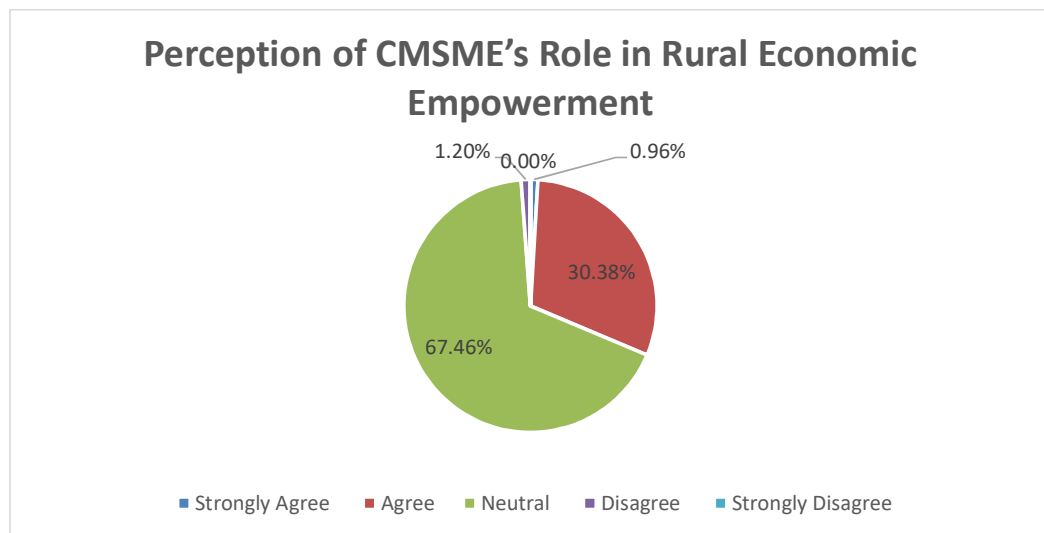


Figure 21 Perception of CMSME's Role in Rural Economic Empowerment

Challenges in Paying Employee Wages

The study reveals that the majority of organizations face significant challenges in paying their employees, with financial constraints and economic downturns being the most prevalent issue, reported by the respondents. This suggests widespread difficulties in managing finances. Political instability is also cited by the respondents, indicating that changes in government policies or unstable environments disrupt the sector. Some of the respondents identify other unique challenges, such as labor shortages or technological disruptions. Overall, financial and economic factors are the primary obstacles for most organizations, while political instability and other specific issues affect a smaller but notable portion.

Key Production Challenges Faced by CMSMEs

The primary production constraint is the scarcity of skilled labor, which impacts industrial output. Elevated operating costs present a significant concern, as numerous firms contend with escalating expenses, including surging raw material and energy prices. The absence of sophisticated technology is a significant concern, as numerous enterprises do not have access to state-of-the-art technologies that may improve their production processes and competitiveness. Several respondents identified distinct obstacles that differ by industry or business.

Primary Marketing Challenges in the Business

CMSMEs frequently encounter difficulties in competing with larger enterprises that possess superior resources. Smaller industries struggle to distinguish themselves and maintain competitiveness in such circumstances. A prevalent difficulty is the deficiency of information or skills in marketing. Many organizations encounter challenges in engaging their target audience without adequate experience, as noted by several respondents.

The expenses associated with digital marketing exacerbate the issue, since most firms are unable to afford costly tools and campaigns. While several organizations surmount these hurdles, others encounter distinct issues such as regulatory constraints or shifts in consumer preferences.

Employee Management Challenges in Daily Operations

The CMSMEs encounter challenges in human resource management. Elevated employee turnover is the predominant concern. This not only interrupts daily operations but also escalates recruitment expenses and investment in new personnel.

A further difficulty is the disinterest in training programs, which may occur if employees perceive them as unimportant or tedious. Certain employees exhibit resistance to altering the existing situation.

Furthermore, several enterprises face challenges with personnel departing for international positions, frequently enticed by superior prospects elsewhere. Addressing these difficulties is crucial for enhanced operational efficiency and team contentment.

Future Business Plans of Entrepreneurs

The report indicates that the majority of CMSMEs are inclined to expand their enterprises, with many seeking to penetrate new markets or enhance operations. Others are endeavoring to introduce new items or services. A diminishing number of organizations are inclined to maintain the status quo, likely due to prudence or satisfaction with current performance. The emphasis on expansion and innovation demonstrates a vibrant and optimistic outlook inside the CMSMEs.

Role of CMSMEs in Achieving Economic, Social, and Environmental Goals

The study concludes that CMSMEs can significantly contribute to the country's development in economic, social, and environmental sectors. They are essential for generating employment, alleviating poverty, and enhancing incomes, hence improving economic circumstances and addressing inequities.

CMSMEs can empower women and youth, promoting diversity and equality in the workforce. They provide training programs that augment individuals' skills.

These companies can promote eco-friendly initiatives, champion sustainability, and enhance public awareness of the necessity for environmental conservation. They address issues such as the use of renewable energy and trash management.

Furthermore, CMSMEs can contribute to the preservation of local culture and heritage by efficiently utilizing local resources and promoting decentralized economic activity.

By utilizing their strengths, CMSMEs are crucial for comprehensive growth and sustainable development in global communities.

Recommended Government Initiatives for CMSME Support

A comprehensive examination of the respondents' recommendations for government actions for CMSME development identifies numerous critical priority areas. The majority of participants expressed a pressing necessity for a low-interest micro-credit financing program. Numerous answers explicitly requested collateral-free financing programs and streamlined application processes.

Additionally, several responders emphasized the significance of training and capacity-building activities. These encompass both technical and practical training programs.

A further crucial element underscored the imperative of market access—both domestic and foreign. Proposals in this category encompassed the reduction of export-related duties and the facilitation of participation in international trade fairs, among others.

Numerous individuals highlighted comprehensive measures to bolster CMSMEs, including fostering entrepreneurship, enhancing industrial policies, and developing superior company infrastructure. Recommendations including streamlining laws, enhancing financial accessibility, providing technology assistance, and creating incubation centers to encourage startups and small enterprises. These modifications seek to cultivate a balanced and supportive ecosystem, enabling CMSMEs to flourish and address concerns like as innovation, growth, and sustainability.

4.2 Regression Analysis Report

Table 5 Regression Report

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics								
Multiple R	0.79349584							
R Square	0.629635648							
Adjusted R Square								
Square	0.615712176							
Standard Error	0.304874402							
Observations	415							
ANOVA								
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F			
Regression	15	63.04853	4.203235	45.22117	2.37E-76			
Residual	399	37.08641	0.092948					
Total	414	100.1349						
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	1.291139399	0.200365	-6.44394	3.36E-10	-1.68504	-0.89724	-1.68504	-0.89724
X Variable 1	0.0764186	0.009698	7.879738	3.15E-14	0.057353	0.095484	0.057353	0.095484
X Variable 2	0.112297848	0.014795	7.590178	2.28E-13	0.083212	0.141384	0.083212	0.141384
X Variable 3	0.058508312	0.015177	3.854984	0.000135	0.028671	0.088346	0.028671	0.088346
X Variable 4	0.116410139	0.01645	7.076814	6.68E-12	0.084072	0.148749	0.084072	0.148749
X Variable 5	0.088814526	0.014298	6.211563	1.32E-09	0.060705	0.116924	0.060705	0.116924
X Variable 6	0.075490026	0.014144	5.337398	1.59E-07	0.047685	0.103295	0.047685	0.103295
X Variable 7	0.104461947	0.014274	7.318582	1.39E-12	0.076401	0.132523	0.076401	0.132523
X Variable 8	0.058846075	0.014212	4.140564	4.23E-05	0.030906	0.086786	0.030906	0.086786
X Variable 9	0.072398966	0.014244	5.082703	5.73E-07	0.044396	0.100402	0.044396	0.100402
X Variable 10	0.072569097	0.014169	5.121789	4.72E-07	0.044714	0.100424	0.044714	0.100424
X Variable 11	0.106404413	0.014353	7.413267	7.45E-13	0.078187	0.134622	0.078187	0.134622
X Variable 12	0.093514499	0.014305	6.537094	1.92E-10	0.065391	0.121638	0.065391	0.121638
X Variable 13	0.099201517	0.014598	6.795394	3.95E-11	0.070502	0.127901	0.070502	0.127901
X Variable 14	0.096538831	0.014599	6.612772	1.21E-10	0.067839	0.125239	0.067839	0.125239
X Variable 15	0.045390035	0.014434	3.14471	0.001787	0.017014	0.073766	0.017014	0.073766

Descriptive Statistics

The primary dataset consisted of **414 valid responses** from CMSME owners and managers operating in rural regions. Each variable was measured using a **1–5 Likert scale**, reflecting the degree of agreement with statements related to job creation, income generation, skill development, financial access, governance, technology adoption, and other CMSME activities.

Initial descriptive analysis indicated generally high mean scores (above 3.5) across most factors, suggesting that CMSMEs are actively engaging in practices that promote rural empowerment.

Key findings:

- **Job Creation, Income Generation, and Skill Development** were among the highest-rated activities.
- **Eco-Friendly Practices and Technology Adoption** exhibited slightly lower means, indicating opportunities for improvement.

(Standard Deviation values remained moderate, suggesting consistent responses across the sample.)

Regression Analysis

A **Multiple Regression Analysis** using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) was performed to identify the effect of various CMSME activities on rural economic empowerment (dependent variable).

Table 6 Model Summary

Statistics	Value
Multiple R	0.793
R Square (R ²)	0.630
Adjusted R ²	0.616
Standard Error	0.305
Observations	415

The **R² value of 0.630** indicates that approximately **63%** of the variation in rural economic empowerment can be explained by the set of independent CMSME activity variables. The **Adjusted R² (61.6%)** remains strong even after adjusting for the number of predictors, confirming the robustness of the model.

The **F-statistic (45.22)** was significant ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the overall regression model is statistically meaningful.

Table 7 Coefficient Analysis

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-Value	Interpretation
(Constant)	-1.291	0.200	-6.444	0.000	Negative baseline without CMSME activities
X1: Job Creation	0.076	0.010	7.880	0.000	Positive, moderate impact
X2: Income Generation	0.112	0.015	7.590	0.000	Strong positive impact
X3: Access to Finance	0.059	0.015	3.855	0.000	Moderate positive impact
X4: Gender Equality Promotion	0.116	0.016	7.077	0.000	Very strong positive impact
X5: Skill Development	0.089	0.014	6.212	0.000	Significant positive impact
X6: Eco-Friendly Practices	0.075	0.014	5.337	0.000	Positive contribution
X7: Good Governance	0.104	0.014	7.319	0.000	Strong predictor
X8: Technology Adoption	0.059	0.014	4.141	0.000	Moderate positive effect
X9: Market Access	0.072	0.014	5.083	0.000	Positive influence
X10: Financial Literacy	0.073	0.014	5.122	0.000	Positive impact
X11: Social Capital & Networking	0.106	0.014	7.413	0.000	Strong positive factor

X12: Business Diversification	0.094	0.014	6.537	0.000	Positive impact
X13: Government Support & Policy Awareness	0.099	0.015	6.795	0.000	Strong contributor
X14: Supply Chain Efficiency	0.097	0.015	6.613	0.000	Significant positive factor
X15: Resilience to Economic Shocks	0.045	0.014	3.145	0.002	Positive but comparatively smaller impact

All p-values are highly significant (<0.001), showing that all variables have a statistically significant influence on rural empowerment.

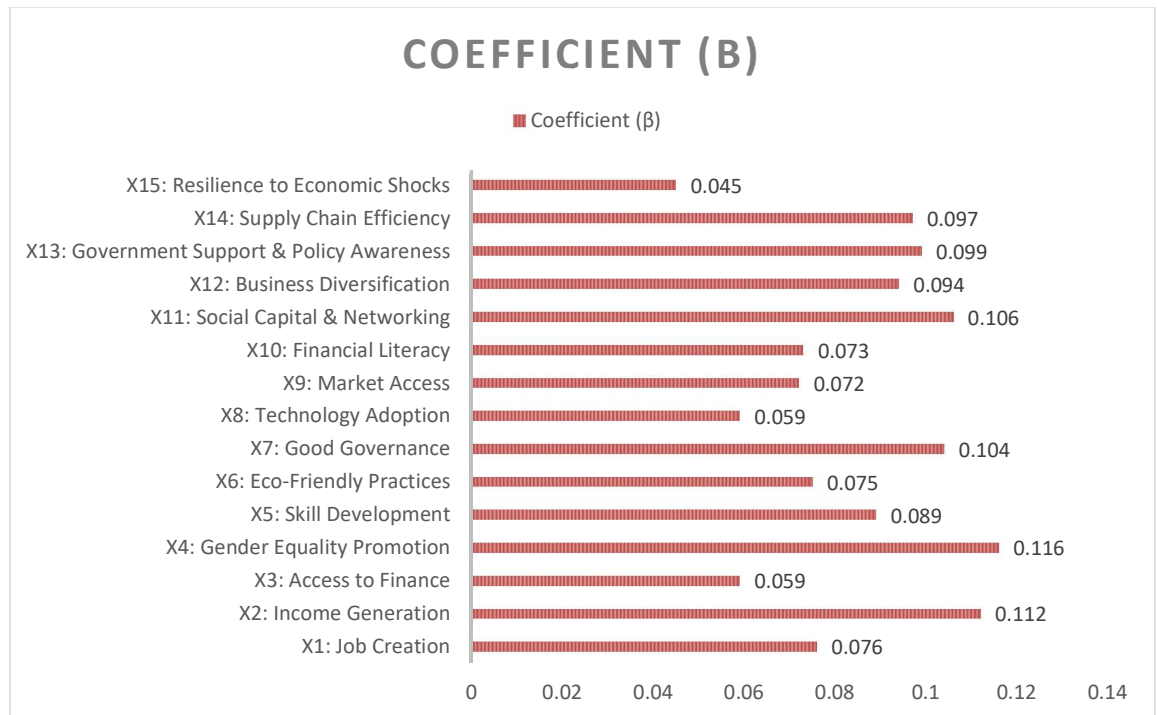


Figure 22 Coefficient (β)

Factor-Wise Interpretation

Each CMSME activity exerts a positive influence on rural economic empowerment, with some factors being more impactful than others:

- **Top 5 Influential Factors:**
 - Gender Equality Promotion ($\beta = 0.116$)
 - Income Generation ($\beta = 0.112$)
 - Good Governance ($\beta = 0.104$)
 - Social Capital & Networking ($\beta = 0.106$)
 - Government Support & Policy Awareness ($\beta = 0.099$)
- **Moderately Influential Factors:**
 - Job Creation, Skill Development, Financial Literacy, Market Access, Supply Chain Efficiency.
- **Lower yet Significant Factors:**
 - Resilience to Economic Shocks ($\beta = 0.045$), though smaller, remains statistically important.

CMSMEs that emphasize gender equality, income generation, governance, and networking can significantly accelerate rural empowerment. Eco-friendly practices and technology adoption, while slightly less influential individually, are critical for long-term sustainability.

4.3 Discussion

The results of this study reveal compelling evidence of the critical role CMSMEs play in promoting rural economic empowerment and achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The statistically significant relationships between all fifteen CMSME activity factors and rural economic empowerment underscore the multifaceted impact of these enterprises.

Interpretation of Key Findings

The **high R² value (0.6296)** indicates that CMSME activities collectively explain a substantial proportion of the variance in rural empowerment outcomes. This suggests that strengthening CMSMEs could be a pivotal strategy for driving rural development.

Among the independent variables, the **most influential factors** were:

- **Gender Equality Promotion ($\beta = 0.116$)**: This factor turned out to be the most significant single driver of rural empowerment. CMSMEs encouraging women's involvement in leadership and fair pay policies greatly improve economic inclusion. This outcome clearly fits SDG 5: Gender Equality and shows that CMSMEs can serve as vehicles for social change outside of economic considerations.
- **Income Generation ($\beta = 0.112$)**: CMSMEs support rural people out of poverty by developing sustainable income sources, hence directly supporting SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Higher salaries also allow more access to health care, technology, and education.
- **Social Capital and Networking ($\beta = 0.106$)**: The capacity to tap into existing community networks and establish partnerships with businesses greatly encourages collaboration and resilience, which in turn supports SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.
- **Good Governance ($\beta = 0.104$) and Government Support & Policy Awareness ($\beta = 0.099$)**: According to the findings, it is essential to have effective governance, transparency, and an understanding of policies that are supportive. All of these things contribute to SDG 16's goal of peace, justice, and strong institutions by making people more confident in government and CMSMEs' ability to execute their business.

Additional factors, including Access to Finance, Skill Development, Supply Chain Efficiency, and Business Diversification, demonstrated significant positive effects, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive strategy in CMSME advancement.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The findings of this study confirm that CMSMEs contribute significantly to multiple SDGs:

Table 8 Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CMSME Factor	Related SDGs	Discussion
Job Creation	SDG 1, SDG 8	Reduces poverty and promotes decent employment
Gender Equality Promotion	SDG 5	Enhances women’s economic participation
Access to Finance	SDG 9, SDG 10	Bridges financial gaps and reduces inequalities
Eco-Friendly Practices	SDG 13	Supports environmental sustainability
Technology Adoption	SDG 9	Enhances innovation and rural infrastructure
Financial Literacy	SDG 4	Promotes quality education through financial knowledge
Supply Chain Efficiency	SDG 12	Encourages responsible production and consumption

These linkages indicate that CMSMEs, if supported and developed strategically, can serve as catalysts for achieving comprehensive sustainable development in rural regions.

Comparative Insights

Comparing these results to global literature, the findings align well with previous studies emphasizing the role of SMEs in economic resilience and poverty reduction (e.g., World Bank reports, UNDP studies). However, this study provides new insights into the **multi-dimensional impacts** of CMSMEs — particularly highlighting the **overlooked areas like gender equality promotion, governance, and eco-friendly practices**.

Additionally, the findings emphasize that **empowerment is not solely a function of income**; rather, it results from **a combination of financial, social, institutional, and environmental factors**.

Practical Implications

Given the demonstrated influence of CMSME activities on empowerment and SDG progress, policymakers, development agencies, and rural entrepreneurs should:

- Prioritize gender-inclusive business models.
- Foster skill development programs aligned with market demands.
- Improve access to affordable finance and financial literacy training.
- Strengthen institutional governance and policy dissemination.
- Promote sustainable and eco-friendly industrial practices.
- Support technology integration and digitalization in rural enterprises.

By addressing these dimensions comprehensively, CMSMEs can serve as foundational pillars of sustainable rural economies.

Contribution to SDG Goals (Context: Rural Economy of Bangladesh)

The study's results make it clear that CMSMEs are very important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Bangladesh's rural economy. About 62% of the country's people still live in rural areas (BBS, 2023), and inequalities and poverty still exist there. This means that strategically empowering CMSMEs is a key way to achieve long-term, inclusive growth.

Bangladesh's rural economy has always been based on farming, informal trade, and small businesses. CMSMEs have become important for modernizing the economy, bringing people together, and protecting the environment through a wide range of activities, such as small-scale industry, agro-processing, and rural services. Here's some background on each SDG contribution:

SDG 1: No Poverty

CMSMEs offer jobs and business opportunities, which are very important for rural households whose main source of income is unstable agricultural income. The fact that the Job Creation and Income Generation factors are both positive shows that growing

CMSMEs lowers extreme poverty in Bangladesh by giving people in rural areas more ways to make money and making them more financially stable.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

The regression study showed that promoting gender equality was the most important factor for empowering individuals. In Bangladesh's rural places, women's economic roles are often limited by traditional gender roles. CMSMEs help break down systemic hurdles by giving women the chance to be entrepreneurs, leaders, and earn fair wages. Micro-businesses like tailoring, handicrafts, and food preparation have helped rural women become financially independent, which has made rural society stronger.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

The model identified three major predictors: skill development, business diversification, and market access. CMSMEs help to create higher-quality jobs and foster entrepreneurial innovation in rural Bangladesh, where formal sector job possibilities are limited.

Skill-building initiatives connected with CMSMEs, such as those run by the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) and the SME Foundation, promote decent working conditions and localized economic growth.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

The industrial transformation of rural Bangladesh is being facilitated by CMSMEs through the adoption of technology and access to finance. The establishment of a contemporary rural industrial base is being facilitated by the adoption of digital payment systems, mobile banking (such as bKash and Nagad), and renewable energy technologies by rural enterprises.

These developments contribute to the reduction of the rural-urban divide in access to infrastructure and innovation, which is a critical objective of Vision 2041.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

CMSMEs assist marginalized populations, such as ethnic minorities and landless rural poor, by providing low-capital opportunities for engagement in formal economic

activities. Enhanced financial literacy and improved access to finance via microcredit institutions, such as Grameen Bank and BRAC, are essential for promoting equitable economic participation in rural Bangladesh.

This mitigates wealth concentration and fosters equitable rural development.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

The encouragement of eco-friendly practices within rural CMSMEs, such as sustainable farming and eco-friendly packaging, is directly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 12. In Bangladesh, the development of rural waste management systems is ongoing; promoting the adoption of green business practices among CMSMEs supports long-term environmental sustainability.

CMSMEs engaged in organic agriculture, renewable energy, and eco-tourism are demonstrating effective models in regions such as Sylhet, Khulna, and the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

SDG 13: Climate Action

Bangladesh is one of the countries most likely to be affected by climate change, so it needs sustainable farming methods right away. CMSMEs that use solar energy, recycle, and set up supply chains that can handle disasters are directly helping rural areas be more resilient to climate change.

A positive but smaller coefficient in the model called CMSME resilience to economic shocks also shows how important it is to build businesses that can handle disasters caused by climate change, such as floods and storms.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Social capital and networking emerged as significant factors of empowerment. CMSMEs flourish through community partnerships, regional supply networks, and business conglomerates. Initiatives such as One House One Farm (Ektee Bari Ektee Khamar) demonstrate how rural cooperative networks can foster mutual prosperity.

Consequently, CMSMEs not only provide revenue but also cultivate essential partnerships for the collective attainment of the SDGs at the grassroots level.

5 Findings

5.1 Overall Findings at a Glance

i. Distribution of Workforce Size among CMSMEs

The survey indicates that 29.9% of CMSMEs employ above 15 workers, whereas 24.6% function with merely 1–4 employees, highlighting a significant prevalence of micro-enterprises. The remaining responders are allocated among several workforce size categories. This variance illustrates the structural diversity within the CMSME sector, encompassing cottage industries to medium-sized firms.

ii. Minimum Daily Wage Standards for Employees

A considerable percentage of employees receive low daily pay, with 37.8% receiving between BDT 300 and 499, and 15.3% earning below BDT 300. Merely 4.5% receive BDT 900 or above. These statistics highlight the ubiquity of low-wage employment in the sector, frequently resulting in elevated turnover, diminished motivation, and constrained production.

iii. Incorporation of Underrepresented Groups in the Labor Force

The participation of marginalized groups—such as third-gender individuals and people with disabilities—is restricted, with merely 13.4% of firms employing over 50% from these communities. A troubling 27.5% indicate the absence of such inclusion. These findings underscore the necessity for more inclusive recruitment procedures.

iv. Understanding of Government Policies and Support for SMEs

22.7% of firms are totally cognizant and actively engaging with government SME support programs, 34.9% are only aware, and 22.2% possess modest awareness. Alarming, 3.6% remain completely uninformed. This gap suggests that numerous CMSMEs may be overlooking critical assistance opportunities owing to insufficient awareness.

v. Facilitation of Financial Access for Business Expansion

Access to money presents a varied experience for CMSMEs: 38.3% consider it 'Easy,' while 36.4% deem it 'Difficult.' Simultaneously, 13.7% perceive it as 'Very Easy,' while 10.6% consider it 'Very Difficult.' A mere 0.7% characterize it as 'Impossible,'

indicating considerable variances within the industry based on size, geography, or financial knowledge.

vi. Interaction with Government and Institutional Funding

Despite 40.4% of CMSMEs being cognizant of financing initiatives, they have not utilized them. Merely 29.9% have availed themselves of such assistance. The data indicates an implementation gap caused by procedural obstacles or information bottlenecks, requiring streamlined processes and enhanced outreach.

vii. Institutional Dedication to Equitable Compensation Frameworks

Approximately one-third of respondents (32.9%) either concur or strongly concur that their organizations uphold equitable compensation across genders and marginalized identities. Nonetheless, 13.9% express disagreement, and 2.4% strongly dissent, and 20.1% maintain a neutral stance. This signifies advancement towards salary equality, although consistency is absent.

viii. Assessment of Women's Involvement

69.3% of respondents rank women's participation as 'Good' or 'Excellent,' indicating a favorable trend. Nevertheless, 7.5% categorize it as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor,' indicating uneven gender involvement throughout the sector.

ix. Regularity of Skill Development Initiatives

Only 29% of CMSMEs consistently provide training or development programs, whilst 33.6% do so intermittently. Simultaneously, 10.5% offer minimal or no training, signifying an absence of strategic emphasis on workforce development.

x. Implementation of Sustainable Practices

Seventy-five point eight percent of CMSMEs assess their environmental practices as 'Good' or 'Excellent,' indicating heightened awareness. Nonetheless, 3.3% characterize them as 'Poor' or 'Very Poor,' primarily because of deficiencies in resources or understanding.

xi. Excellence of Operational and Management Practices

Over seventy-five percent of CMSMEs evaluate their operational and managerial processes favorably—28.9% as 'Excellent' and 50% as 'Good.' Nonetheless, 19.9% classify them as 'Average,' indicating opportunities for enhancement via capacity-building and digital resources.

xii. Utilization of Digital Tools and Automation

While 36.5% assess their utilization of digital tools as 'Good' and 33.1% as 'Average,' certain CMSMEs have challenges with digital adoption—9.4% classify it as 'Poor' and 3.9% as 'Very Poor.' These statistics underscore persistent difficulties in digital transformation.

xiii. Market Accessibility

CMSMEs predominantly assess their market access as 'Average' (37.4%) or 'Good' (36.9%). Merely 17.2% choose 'Excellent' access, indicating a want for enhanced assistance for market expansion, particularly on an international scale.

xiv. Financial Management Proficiencies

The majority of entrepreneurs assess their financial skills as 'Good' (41.3%) or 'Average' (36%). Nonetheless, merely 16.4% assert 'Excellent' capabilities, signifying a substantial gap in strategic financial planning.

xv. The Significance of Networking

Approximately 79% of participants concur or strongly concur that networking is essential for development. This robust consensus highlights the significance of partnerships and collaborative ecosystems.

xvi. Diversification of Products/Services

CMSMEs predominantly seek diversification within local markets, with 48.4% self-assessing as 'Average' in this aspect. Wider diversification is infrequent however increasing, with 17.8% ranking it as 'Excellent' and 19% as 'Good.'

xvii. Efficiency of the Supply Chain

36.3% of CMSMEs indicate 'Good' supply chain performance, 21.7% claim 'Excellent,' while 38% categorize it as 'Average.' A mere minority reports subpar performance, suggesting general robustness with potential for enhancement.

xviii. Resilience to Economic Adversities

Approximately 50% of CMSMEs assess their business resilience as 'Average,' while 31.8% classify it as 'Good' and 11.3% as 'Excellent.' These findings indicate moderate resilience, necessitating financial and policy assistance for enhancement.

xix. Investment in Sustainable Infrastructure

The majority of CMSMEs allocate 5–15% of their resources to sustainability, whilst hardly 9% invest over 20%. A significant 18.3% designate less than 5%, reflecting differing degrees of dedication.

xx. Regional Infrastructure and Utilities

Perceptions are predominantly favorable: 34.5% assess infrastructure as 'Good,' 33.5% as 'Average,' and 19% as 'Excellent.' Less than 13% encounter substantial problems.

xxi. Function in Rural Economic Empowerment

A significant majority (97.84%) concur that CMSMEs strengthen rural areas. Merely 2.16% dissent, underscoring the sector's acknowledged role in rural economic advancement.

xxii. Thematic Obstacles and Prospects

Challenges in Wage Disbursement: Monetary limitations and political turbulence frequently hinder regular salary payments.

Production Challenges: A deficiency of competent workers, elevated operational expenses, and insufficient technology are significant obstacles. Marketing Challenges: Insufficient marketing expertise, elevated digital marketing expenses, and competition with large enterprises impede exposure. Employee Management: Elevated turnover, lack of engagement in training, and

migration for international employment are significant issues. Future Business Strategies: The majority of entrepreneurs aspire to penetrate new markets and diversify their services, demonstrating a progressive and inventive perspective.

The role of CMSMEs in sustainability encompasses economic, social, and environmental dimensions. They foster employment, promote inclusivity, enhance skill development, and safeguard the environment, all while maintaining local culture and decentralizing economic operations.

5.2 Regression Analysis at a Glance:

This study utilized multiple linear regression analysis to investigate the association between the dependent variable and fifteen independent variables. The regression model demonstrated a robust fit, with an R-squared value of 0.6296, signifying that about 62.96% of the variance in the dependent variable is elucidated by the independent variables used in the model. The Adjusted R-squared value was 0.6157, indicating substantial explanatory power despite the adjustment for the number of factors. The model was statistically significant, as indicated by the ANOVA findings ($F = 45.22$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating that the predictors jointly account for variance in the dependent variable.

Analysis of Coefficients

All fifteen independent variables had positive regression coefficients that were statistically significant at the 1% level ($p < 0.01$), indicating a persistent and robust positive correlation with the dependent variable. The intercept was negative and statistically significant ($\beta = -1.2911$, $p < 0.001$), signifying the anticipated value of the dependent variable when all independent variables are zero.

- The individual standardized coefficients for the predictors varied from 0.0454 to 0.1164.
- X Variable 4 demonstrated the highest coefficient ($\beta = 0.1164$, $p < 0.001$) among the independent variables, indicating it exerted the most significant positive effect on the dependent variable.
- X Variable 15 exhibited the weakest positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.0454$, $p < 0.01$), however it retained statistical significance.

All predictors had p-values significantly below 0.01, hence reinforcing the robustness and statistical significance of the found correlations. The standard errors remained consistently low across variables, indicating the accuracy of the coefficient estimations.

Model Evaluation

The standard error of the estimate was 0.3049, indicating that the average deviation between the observed values and the regression line is minimal, hence reinforcing the model's predictive ability. No variable exhibited indications of multicollinearity or considerable variance inflation, as the coefficients were stable and significant.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Policy Recommendations

Given the significant role of CMSMEs in promoting rural economic empowerment and contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Bangladesh, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders act collaboratively to maximize their potential. Based on the regression analysis and findings, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

For Government Policymakers

- **Enhance Access to Finance**
 - Simplify loan procedures for rural CMSMEs through digital platforms.
 - Expand collateral-free microfinance programs.
 - Develop a dedicated "CMSME Rural Empowerment Fund" offering low-interest credit.
- **Strengthen Rural Infrastructure**
 - Invest in rural transport, digital networks (e.g., high-speed internet), and sustainable energy sources to reduce operating costs for CMSMEs.
 - Establish CMSME industrial parks and rural business clusters.
- **Promote Gender-Inclusive Policies**
 - Mandate gender equity training for CMSME entrepreneurs.
 - Provide special incentives (tax breaks, grants) for women-led rural enterprises.
- **Facilitate Technology Adoption**
 - Launch rural digital literacy programs targeted at CMSME operators.
 - Subsidize the adoption of eco-friendly and smart technologies (e.g., solar panels, mobile payment systems).
- **Institutionalize Skill Development Programs**
 - Align technical and vocational education with CMSME sector needs.
 - Promote apprenticeship programs linking youth to rural businesses.
- **Foster a Supportive Legal Environment**
 - Simplify registration and licensing procedures for rural CMSMEs.
 - Protect intellectual property rights (IPRs) of rural innovators and artisans.

For CMSME Owners and Entrepreneurs

- **Adopt Eco-Friendly Business Practices**
 - Integrate sustainable resource management (water, energy, waste) into operations.
 - Explore certification schemes (e.g., organic labeling) to access premium markets.
- **Focus on Financial Literacy**
 - Improve understanding of budgeting, investment, digital transactions, and savings.
 - Engage with financial advisory services offered by NGOs and microfinance institutions.
- **Strengthen Social Capital**
 - Form or join local CMSME associations or cooperatives to share resources, knowledge, and market opportunities.
 - Collaborate on group marketing initiatives to expand rural-to-urban linkages.
- **Diversify Business Models**
 - Explore product diversification to minimize risks linked to seasonality and economic shocks (e.g., combining farming with agri-processing).

For Financial Institutions and Banks

- **Design Rural-Friendly Financial Products**
 - Develop small-ticket, fast-disbursing loans tailored for micro and cottage entrepreneurs.
 - Introduce flexible repayment schedules aligned with seasonal income cycles.
- **Promote Inclusive Lending**
 - Set rural and gender-based targets for loan portfolios.
 - Offer capacity-building workshops on credit management to rural borrowers.

- **Expand Mobile Banking Services**
 - Partner with telecom operators to extend mobile financial services deeper into rural communities.
 - Use agent banking models to reach remote, underserved areas.

For NGOs and Development Agencies

- **Capacity Building and Training**
 - Provide modular training on business management, marketing, and eco-entrepreneurship for rural CMSMEs.
 - Conduct financial literacy and digital skills workshops.
- **Advocate for Policy Change**
 - Serve as intermediaries between CMSMEs and policymakers by documenting and communicating rural entrepreneurs' challenges.
 - Champion causes like gender equity, fair market access, and environmental sustainability in rural enterprise.
- **Support Networking Platforms**
 - Create forums where rural entrepreneurs can connect with urban markets, investors, and exporters.

For International Development Partners (e.g., UNDP, World Bank, IFC)

- **Provide Strategic Funding**
 - Invest in large-scale rural CMSME development projects aligned with SDG targets.
 - Focus funding on gender-responsive, climate-smart, and digitally-enabled CMSME initiatives.
- **Facilitate Knowledge Transfer**
 - Bring global best practices in rural entrepreneurship, inclusive finance, and green technologies to Bangladesh.
 - Support pilot projects testing innovative CMSME models (e.g., blockchain for rural supply chains).
- **Monitor and Evaluate Impact**
 - Establish SDG-aligned CMSME impact assessment frameworks to measure and guide ongoing progress.

6.2 Overall Recommendations

i. Improve Financial Accessibility and Support

Facilitate access to financial services for CMSMEs, especially in distant regions. Strategies may encompass the establishment of localized financing centers, provision of low-interest loans, and implementation of financial literacy training to enhance the financial management competencies of CMSMEs. Enhancing digital banking services can further close the accessibility gap for rural businesses.

ii. Promote Enhanced Compensation Frameworks

Encourage CMSMEs to provide elevated pay via legislative initiatives such as wage subsidies or tax incentives. Assisting firms that surpass minimal wage standards will diminish staff turnover, elevate enthusiasm, and enhance long-term productivity, while concurrently invigorating rural economies via augmented household expenditure.

iii. Advocate for Workforce Inclusivity

Urge CMSMEs to implement inclusive recruitment strategies, especially for vulnerable populations, including those with disabilities and third-gender individuals. Governments and development organizations must offer training and initiate awareness initiatives, coupled with financial incentives for firms employing individuals from these groups, to enhance labor market integration.

iv. Enhance Awareness of Government Initiatives

Enhance the outreach and accessibility of governmental assistance programs via focused informational efforts. Cooperation among local government entities, financial institutions, and community organizations can guarantee that rural CMSMEs are apprised of accessible subsidies, grants, and capacity-building programs. Streamlining application processes will facilitate increased participation.

v. Facilitate Digital Adoption

Enhance rural CMSMEs' access to cost-effective digital tools and automation technology. Government subsidies or incentives for investments in digital infrastructure, along with digital literacy training, will empower these firms to augment operational efficiency, broaden market access, and enhance competitiveness.

vi. Implement Skill Development Initiatives

Encourage CMSMEs to invest in worker skill development by collaborating with educational institutions and vocational training institutes. Tailored training initiatives, bolstered by government-funded subsidies, can provide rural CMSME workers with the requisite skills for sustainable development.

vii. Enhance Women's Empowerment in CMSMEs

Enhance initiatives to promote women's participation in CMSMEs, including financial awards or subsidies for women-owned enterprises or those with significant female engagement. Training and mentorship programs aimed at women entrepreneurs would enhance their capacity to take on leadership positions and expand their businesses.

viii. Advocate for Sustainable Practices

Motivate CMSMEs to embrace ecologically sustainable practices by providing tax incentives for investments in green technologies or sustainable manufacturing methods. Government initiatives must prioritize teaching rural firms on the enduring economic advantages of sustainability, encompassing cost reductions and enhanced marketability.

ix. Enhance Networking and Market Accessibility

Assist CMSMEs in engaging with local and worldwide trade exhibitions, digital marketing platforms, and networking opportunities. Governments and NGOs can facilitate business matching events and trade missions to assist rural firms in accessing wider markets. Moreover, investments in rural infrastructure, such as roads and internet connectivity, are essential for enhancing market access.

x. Improve Supply Chain Management

Facilitate CMSMEs in enhancing supply chain efficiency by offering access to logistics solutions and supply chain management training. Government initiatives may provide subsidies or low-interest loans to facilitate investments in transportation, warehousing, and technological enhancements.

xi. Strengthen Resilience Against Economic Disruptions

Enhance the resilience of CMSMEs by providing training in crisis management and financial planning. Initiatives may encompass government-funded insurance programs for small businesses and specific financial assistance during economic recessions or natural calamities.

xii. Promote Local Business Development

Motivate CMSMEs to expand their product and service portfolios by recognizing unique opportunities in local markets. Government programs ought to facilitate this by offering market knowledge, business planning support, and networking opportunities to foster innovation and growth.

7 Conclusions

The research aims to assess the impact of CMSMEs on the empowerment of the rural economy in Bangladesh. The model's statistical robustness (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.616$) highlights the critical significance of CMSME activities in rural socio-economic development. CMSMEs exhibit a beneficial impact on rural economic empowerment. They achieve this through several methods, such as job creation and revenue generation, promoting gender equality, enhancing access to financial resources, increasing technological adoption, providing new skills, and assuring ecologically friendly practices. The principal elements encompassed the progression of gender equality, revenue generation, effective governance, social networking, and awareness of governmental programs. This underscores that empowerment is intricately linked to social, institutional, and environmental advancement, in addition to economic benefits.

The role of CMSMEs directly accelerates the nation's advancement towards Sustainable Development, namely in fulfilling SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

A comprehensive and integrated plan involving government agencies, entrepreneurs, financial institutions, NGOs, and foreign development partners is required for successfully leveraging the revolutionary potential of CMSMEs.

Strategic investments in rural infrastructure, financial accessibility, cultivation of talent, technological integration, and regulatory reforms are required.

Ultimately, enhancing CMSMEs serves not just to strengthen the economy but also to cultivate flexible, inclusive, and sustainable rural communities in Bangladesh.

Empowering CMSMEs today will allow Bangladesh to achieve a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future for its rural population tomorrow.

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Annexure

1. Questionnaire



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয়
বাংলাদেশ ক্ষুদ্র ও কুটির শিল্প কর্পোরেশন (বিসিক)
বিসিক ট্রেনিং ইনস্টিটিউট (বিটিআই)
প্লট # ২৪/এ, রোড # ১৩/এ, সেক্টর # ০৬, উত্তরা মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা-১২৩০।
ওয়েব পোর্টাল : scitidhaka.bscic.gov.bd



‘Empowering the Rural Economy: The Role of CMSMEs in Achieving Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)’ শীর্ষক গবেষণা

শিল্প মালিক/উদ্যোক্তাদের জন্য প্রযোজ্য

(উত্তরদাতার গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে)

উদ্যোক্তা/তথ্য প্রদানকারীর তথ্য

নাম :

পদবি :

প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম
ও ঠিকানা :

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা : ☐ প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা
☐ মাধ্যমিক/সমমান
☐ উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সমমান
☐ অনার্স/সমমান
☐ অন্যান্য (.....)

বয়স :

মোবাইল নম্বর :

ই-মেইল :

প্রতিষ্ঠানের	: ☐ কুটির	প্রতিষ্ঠানের	: ☐ কৃষি
আকার	: ☐ মাইক্রো	ধরন	: ☐ উৎপাদন
	: ☐ ক্ষুদ্র		: ☐ সেবা
	: ☐ মাঝারি		: ☐ অন্যান্য (.....)

পণ্য/সেবার
বিবরণ :

উত্তরদাতার স্বাক্ষর

প্রশ্নমালা

১) আপনার CMSME-তে কতজন কর্মচারী কাজ করেন?

- ৫ ☐ ১৫ এর বেশি
৪ ☐ ১৩-১৫
৩ ☐ ৯-১২
২ ☐ ৫-৮
১ ☐ ১-৪

২) আপনার কর্মচারীদের ন্যূনতম দৈনিক মজুরি কত?

- ৫ ☐ ৯০০ টাকা বা তার বেশি
৪ ☐ ৭০০-৮৯৯ টাকা
৩ ☐ ৫০০-৬৯৯ টাকা
২ ☐ ৩০০-৪৯৯ টাকা
১ ☐ ৩০০ টাকার কম

৩) আপনার কর্মসংখ্যার মধ্যে নারী, তৃতীয় লিঙ্গ, বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি এবং প্রান্তিক জনগোষ্ঠীর হার কত?

- ৫ ☐ ৫০% বা তার বেশি
৪ ☐ ২৬-৫০%
৩ ☐ ১০-২৫%
২ ☐ ১০%-এর কম
১ ☐ নেই

৪) সরকারি নীতি ও এসএমই সহায়তা কর্মসূচি সম্পর্কে আপনি কতটা সচেতন?

- ৫ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ সচেতন এবং তা ব্যবহার করছি
৪ ☐ ভালোভাবে সচেতন
৩ ☐ মাঝারি মাত্রায় সচেতন
২ ☐ সামান্য সচেতন
১ ☐ একদমই সচেতন নই

৫) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য অর্থ সংগ্রহ করা কতটা সহজ?

- ৫ ☐ খুব সহজ
৪ ☐ সহজ
৩ ☐ কঠিন
২ ☐ খুব কঠিন
১ ☐ একদমই সম্ভব নয়

৬) আপনি কি কোনো সরকারি বা প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক SME অর্থায়ন কর্মসূচি সম্পর্কে জানেন?

- ৫ ☐ হ্যাঁ, এবং আমি উপকৃত হয়েছি
৪ ☐ হ্যাঁ, তবে আমি সেগুলো ব্যবহার করিনি
৩ ☐ না, তবে জানি
২ ☐ আমি জানি না
১ ☐ না, আমি জানি না এবং বুঝতেও পারি না

৭) আমার প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মীদের (পুরুষ, নারী, তৃতীয় লিঙ্গ, বিশেষ চাহিদাসম্পন্ন ও প্রান্তিক জনগোষ্ঠী) জন্য মজুরি কাঠামো সমান।

- ৫ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ একমত
৪ ☐ একমত
৩ ☐ নিরপেক্ষ
২ ☐ অসম্মত
১ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ অসম্মত

৮) আপনার CMSME-তে সকল পর্যায়ে নারীদের অংশগ্রহণ/ভূমিকা মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

৯) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচি
আয়োজনের মাত্রা মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ সবসময়
৪ ☐ প্রায়ই
৩ ☐ মাঝেমধ্যে
২ ☐ কদাচিৎ
১ ☐ কখনই না

১০) পরিবেশবান্ধব উদ্যোগ (নবায়নযোগ্য
জ্বালানি/বর্জ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা/নিরাপদ পানি/স্যানিটেশন
ইত্যাদি) গ্রহণে আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের ভূমিকা মূল্যায়ন
করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১১) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের পরিচালন ও ব্যবস্থাপনা
(স্বচ্ছ নিয়োগ প্রক্রিয়া, সময়মতো বেতন প্রদান,
অভিযোগ নিষ্পত্তি ইত্যাদি) মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১২) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের দৈনন্দিন কার্যক্রমে
(উপস্থিতি, আর্থিক কার্যক্রম ইত্যাদি) ডিজিটাল টুল,
অনলাইন প্ল্যাটফর্ম বা অটোমেশনের ব্যবহার মূল্যায়ন
করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১৩) আপনার ব্যবসার জন্য স্থানীয়/জাতীয়/
আন্তর্জাতিক বাজার প্রবেশাধিকার মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১৪) ব্যবসায়ের আর্থিক ব্যবস্থাপনা (বাজেটিং এবং
বিনিয়োগ ইত্যাদি) সম্পর্কে আপনার বোঝাপড়া ও
দক্ষতা মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ দুর্বল
১ ☐ খুবই দুর্বল

১৫) আমার প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিকাশে স্থানীয় ব্যবসায়ী,
উদ্যোক্তা, বাণিজ্য সংগঠনের সাথে সংযোগ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ
ভূমিকা পালন করে....

- ৫ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ একমত
৪ ☐ একমত
৩ ☐ নিরপেক্ষ
২ ☐ অসম্মত
১ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ অসম্মত

১৬) আর্থিক ঝুঁকি কমাতে আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের
বৈচিত্র্যপূর্ণ পণ্য বা সেবা (বিভিন্ন পণ্য লাইন, নতুন
বাজার, বা পরিপূরক সেবা) প্রদানের বিষয়টি মূল্যায়ন
করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার (আমি একাধিক পণ্য একাধিক
দেশী/বিদেশী বাজারে সরবরাহ করি)
৪ ☐ ভাল (আমি একটি পণ্য একাধিক দেশী/বিদেশী
বাজারে সরবরাহ করি)
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি (আমি একাধিক পণ্য একাধিক
স্থানীয় বাজারে সরবরাহ করি)
২ ☐ খারাপ (আমি একটি পণ্য বা সেবা প্রদান করি
তবে সেগুলি একাধিক স্থানীয় বাজারে)
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ (আমি একটি পণ্য বা সেবা প্রদান
করি তবে সেগুলি একটি স্থানীয় বাজারে)

১৭) কীচামাল সংগ্রহ, উৎপাদন ও বিতরণের ক্ষেত্রে আপনার ব্যবসার সরবরাহ চেইন মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১৮) অর্থনৈতিক চ্যালেঞ্জ মোকাবিলায় আপনার ব্যবসা প্রতিষ্ঠানের সক্ষমতা মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

১৯) টেকসই অবকাঠামো (সৌর প্যানেল/বায়োগ্যাস প্ল্যান্ট/পানি সংরক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা/পুনর্ব্যবহৃত উপকরণের ব্যবহার ইত্যাদি) এবং উদ্ভাবনে আপনার ব্যবসার বিনিয়োগ (মোট লভ্যাংশের কত শতাংশ) মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ অনেক বেশি বিনিয়োগ করে (>২০%)
৪ ☐ যথেষ্ট বিনিয়োগ করে (১৫-২০%)
৩ ☐ মাঝারি পরিমাণে বিনিয়োগ (১০-১৪%)
২ ☐ কম বিনিয়োগ করে (৫-৯%)
১ ☐ সামান্য বিনিয়োগ নেই (<৫%)

২০) আপনার এলাকার অবকাঠামো ও উপযোগ (Utilities) সুবিধা, যেমন: রাস্তা, বিদ্যুৎ, গ্যাস, ইন্টারনেট সম্পর্কে মূল্যায়ন করুন।

- ৫ ☐ চমৎকার
৪ ☐ ভালো
৩ ☐ মোটামুটি
২ ☐ খারাপ
১ ☐ খুব খারাপ

২১) সামগ্রিক বিবেচনায় (আয় সৃষ্টি, কর্মসংস্থান, অর্থায়নে প্রবেশাধিকার, লিঙ্গ অন্তর্ভুক্তি, দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন এবং পরিবেশবান্ধব অনুশীলন, অন্যান্য) গ্রামীণ অর্থনৈতিক ক্ষমতায়নে CMSME গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে।

- ৫ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ একমত
৪ ☐ একমত
৩ ☐ নিরপেক্ষ
২ ☐ অসম্মত
১ ☐ সম্পূর্ণ অসম্মত

চ্যালেঞ্জ/সুবিধাসমূহ (একাধিক উত্তর হতে পারে)

২২) কর্মচারীদের বেতন/মজুরি প্রদান করতে কী ধরনের চ্যালেঞ্জের সম্মুখীন হন?

- ☐ আর্থিক সীমাবদ্ধতা
☐ রাজনৈতিক অস্থিরতা
☐ অর্থনৈতিক মন্দা
☐ প্রযোজ্য নয়
☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

২৩) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রধান উৎপাদন চ্যালেঞ্জ কী?

- ☐ উচ্চ পরিচালন ব্যয়
☐ দক্ষ কর্মীর ঘাটতি
☐ নিম্ন উৎপাদনশীলতা
☐ উন্নত প্রযুক্তির অভাব
☐ প্রযোজ্য নয়
☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

.....

২৪) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রধান বিপণন চ্যালেঞ্জ কী?

- ☐ বিপণন দক্ষতার অভাব
☐ বড় প্রতিষ্ঠানের সাথে অসম প্রতিযোগিতা
☐ ডিজিটাল মার্কেটিং ব্যয় বেশি
☐ লক্ষ্য গ্রাহক চিহ্নিত করতে সমস্যা
☐ প্রযোজ্য নয়
☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

.....

২৫) আপনার প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মী ব্যবস্থাপনার চ্যালেঞ্জ কী?

- ☐ উচ্চ কর্মী পরিবর্তনের হার
- ☐ বিদেশে যাওয়ার প্রবণতা
- ☐ প্রশিক্ষণের প্রতি আগ্রহের অভাব
- ☐ প্রযোজ্য নয়
- ☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

.....

২৬) আমার ব্যবসা প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়ে ভবিষ্যত পরিকল্পনা নিম্নরূপ-

- ☐ ব্যবসা সম্প্রসারণ করা
- ☐ ব্যবসা পরিবর্তন করা
- ☐ নতুন পণ্য বা সেবা যুক্ত করা
- ☐ বর্তমান অবস্থা বজায় রাখা
- ☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

.....

২৭) CMSME-গুলো অর্থনৈতিক, সামাজিক ও পরিবেশগত উন্নয়নে কী ভূমিকা রাখতে পারে?

- ☐ উদ্যোক্তা সৃষ্টি ও কর্মসংস্থান বৃদ্ধি
- ☐ আয় বৃদ্ধি ও দারিদ্র্য হ্রাস
- ☐ রপ্তানি ও বৈদেশিক মুদ্রা অর্জন
- ☐ অর্থনীতির বিকেন্দ্রীকরণ
- ☐ স্থানীয় সম্পদের কার্যকর ব্যবহার
- ☐ নারী ও তরুণ উদ্যোক্তা বিকাশ
- ☐ সমাজে বৈষম্য হ্রাস
- ☐ প্রশিক্ষণ ও দক্ষতা উন্নয়ন
- ☐ স্থানীয় সংস্কৃতি ও ঐতিহ্য সংরক্ষণ
- ☐ পরিবেশবান্ধব উৎপাদন
- ☐ নবায়নযোগ্য শক্তি ব্যবহার
- ☐ বর্জ্য ব্যবস্থাপনা ও পুনঃব্যবহার
- ☐ পরিবেশ সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধি
- ☐ অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

.....

২৮) CMSME উন্নয়নের জন্য সরকারের কী ধরনের উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করা উচিত?

উত্তর লিখুন:

