

Report On  
“The Influence of Trade Finance Solutions on Customer Loyalty”

By

Amit Biswas  
20304030

An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

September 2024

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

**Student's Full Name & Signature:**

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**Amit Biswas**  
20304030

**Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:**

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**Saif Hossain**  
Assistant Professor, Brac Business School  
Brac University

## Letter of Transmittal

Saif Hossain

Assistant Professor,

BRAC Business School,

BRAC University

Kha 224 Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Ave, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of Internship Report on The Influence of Trade Finance Solutions on Customer Loyalty

Dear Sir,

It's my great pleasure, I have submitted my internship report for your kind consideration. In order to complete the requirements for the BBA program, I am submitting my internship report on "**The influence of trade finance solutions on customer loyalty**". I went through a tremendous chance to obtain hands-on expertise in a professional setting by participating in this internship, which also significantly improved my academic performance. I have made an effort to follow your instructions in an organized way while I have been writing this report. Apart from my meticulous research, this report represents a valuable resource that has enabled me to conduct an in-depth analysis of the actual situation. My three-month internship has been an incredible opportunity for me further develop my understanding of company culture.

I truly hope and pray that you would provide permission for the report to be approved.

Sincerely yours,

---

Amit Biswas

20304030

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Date: The 21<sup>st</sup> September, 2024

## **Non-Disclosure Agreement**

This present agreement is made and executed by and between the Southeast Bank PLC as one party and the undersigned student of BRAC University whose name is Amit Biswas as the other party. Southeast Bank Ltd.'s proprietary and sensitive information must be kept confidential by the undersigned at all times during their employment with the Bank and at no time afterward, unless permission has been granted in writing by Southeast Bank Ltd. The person or party that signs below confirm to the fact that they have read through this non-disclosure agreement and agrees to be bound by all the terms of the agreement.

### **Student's Full Name & Signature:**

---

Amit Biswas

ID: 20304030

### **Internship Company Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:**

---

Mehbuba-De-Laila

First Assistant Vice President

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Autograph 67 & 68, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka.

## **Acknowledgement**

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to the almighty for providing me with the courage to carry out my intern duties and finish the report by the deadline. In addition, I am really grateful for my parents' constant mental assistance during the hard time. I could not be in this position now without the constant support.

I express my gratitude to my internship supervisor Saif Hossain, an Assistant professor at BRAC Business School, BRAC University. Who has provided me with guidance during the internship. He offered me the tools I needed to do the task and crucial advice anytime I was stopped. Additionally, I am grateful to Riyashad Ahmed, Assistant Professor and my internship co-supervisor from Brac Business School, for his assistance and valuable ideas when I was writing this paper.

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Southeast Bank where I have been employed in the last three months, and where I gained practical job experience. I would additionally like to express my gratitude to my co-supervisor and colleagues for their helpful advice and important information. My sincere appreciation extends towards Mehbuba De Laila, First Assistant Vice President at Southeast Bank and my co-supervisor, for her expert advice and assistance from the initial stages of my internship. Likewise, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the senior officers of Banani Branch, Md. Nur Mohammad, A.B.M. Shamsul Arefin, for their constant encouragement.

Lastly, I truly wish to thank BRAC University for its excellence in education, which inspires me and promotes knowledge.

## **Executive Summary**

In this study, the effects of trade finance options offered by Southeast Bank PLC on client loyalty are examined, with an emphasis on client satisfaction and the use of technology in decision-making. The study, which is based on a survey of 117 clients, highlights the usage of digital solutions, cost-effectiveness, and service speed as important elements impacting loyalty. The most often used services were import and export letters of credit (LCs), with most clients reporting satisfaction. To improve the overall consumer experience, it was recognized that certain areas, such as pricing and customer service, required to be improved. Most customers agreed that technological changes or automation and digital platforms were good but some of them faced some difficulties which meant that there is room for improvement to make the system more efficient.

Therefore, the key findings of the report suggest that Southeast Bank ought to establish greater customer loyalty through the advancement of service processes, reinforcement of customer support, and optimization of administrative solutions. Some of the specific suggestions made include efficiency, mobile and online platform and the periodic feedback. These enhancements are necessary for the bank to remain relevant and competitive in the trade finance market and to align with the customers' needs and increase their lifetime value. To better integrate services with customer preferences, recommendations include reducing procedures, increasing digital and mobile accessibility, and implementing ongoing feedback channels. By taking these steps, the bank ensures its ability to always provide its wide range of clients with trustworthy and efficient trade finance solutions.

**Key Words:** Customer Loyalty, Client Satisfaction, Service Efficiency, Technological Advancement.

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## **List of Acronyms**

AI: Artificial Intelligence

ATM: Automated Teller Machine

CRM: Customer Relationship Management

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

FDR: Fixed Deposit Receipt

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HR: Human Resources

IT: Information Technology

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

LC: Letter of Credit

MIS: Management Information System

NPL: Non-Performing Loans

PLC: Public Limited Company

SEBL: Southeast Bank

SME: Small and Medium Enterprise

## Glossary

Bank Guarantees	An undertaking that a bank gives in its capacity as a guarantor in the event that a borrower fails to meet his or her obligations in respect of a loan or any other form of credit.
Compliance	Compliance with laws, rules, and regulations, policy and procedures, and standards applicable to the business especially in banking sector and trade operations.
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	It is measurable values that show to what extent the company is meeting strategic business goals.
Letters of Credit (LC)	A credit instrument used by the buyer's bank to assure the seller that the buyer's payment will be received on time and for the correct amount quite a document that will be provided by the bank.
Trade Finance	Foreign trading and business finance tools available for purchasing or importing products such as letter of credit (LCs), trade and other guarantees and trade loans.

## **Chapter 1: Overview of Internship**

### **1.1 Student Information**

Name: Amit Biswas

ID: 20304030

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration

Major: Accounting

Major 2: Computer Information Management

### **1.2 Internship Information**

#### **1.2.1 Time Period and Company Details**

Time Period: 12 weeks. 26 May 2024 – 26 August, 2024.

Company Name: Southeast Bank PLC

Department: Foreign Trade

Address: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Autograph 67 & 68, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Work Office Shift and Timming: Sunday to Thursday, 9.30 AM- 5 PM

#### **1.2.2 Internship Company Supervisor's Information**

Name: Mehbuba-De-Laila

Position: First Assistant Vice President

#### **1.2.3 Job Description/Responsibilities**

I was assigned to the foreign trade division while I was an intern at Southeast Bank PLC. In addition, Mehbuba-De-Laila, First Assistant Vice President at the Banani branch, was responsible

for me at the time I was employed. Moreover, the supervisor gave me a briefing on the job functions such as duties as well as the atmosphere of the workplace. The branch staff was extremely accommodating and kind, which has simplified the process for me. As an intern, I was not given specific responsibilities; alternatively, I was supposed to watch, learn, support and assist employees with their daily responsibilities. The main duties I performed throughout my internship were the following:

**1. Documentation:**

- Draft and check import/export paperwork, such as invoices of lading, credit certificates (LCs), as well as additional trade-related paperwork.
- Double-check adherence to bank policies along with foreign trade rules and regulations.

**2. Client Communication:**

- Make available guidance and assistance to clients in order to help them with their trade financing requirements.
- Responding to consumer questions and deal with problems pertaining to international commerce transactions with the Bangladesh Bank import/export monitoring cell.

**3. The exchange Procedures:**

- Address financial transactions, such as exchanges of currencies, payments, and the processing of its payments.

- Follow up and oversee the development of trade transactions to guarantee their quick fulfillment.

#### **4. Following Risk Assessment and Management**

- To safeguard against fraud and guarantee compliance with regulatory requirements, perform thorough research along with verification of compliance on trade agreements.
- Support risk control alongside assessment in relation to international trade operations.

#### **5. Administrative Assistance:**

- Help the foreign trade division with basic administrative duties such as data entry, filing, recording and record keeping.

### **1.3 Internship Outcomes**

#### **1.3.1 Contribution to the Company**

As an intern of SEBL I have contributed toward the Foreign Trade division by performing operational duties and most importantly by providing necessary assistance in operational projects. I was particularly assigned to deal with trade documents, these include, invoices, bills of lading among which are letters of credit (LCs). The steps that I took to ensure these documents complied with the policies of the bank, as well as policies concerning international trade minimized errors and standardized time taken to process the work. Likewise, I also reporting directly to the trade finance team to create linkage with the clients in managing their trade financing requirements and on LC applications. Also, I kept track of the foreign exchange transactions and payment to make

sure that the international business transactions were done on time. By so doing, I was able to enhance the department's efficiency and at the same time increase the value of customer service. Additionally, I contributed to administrative tasks by filing and sorting documents and paperwork to enhance the team's overall efficiency and also, I was able to make useful contributions as well as acquire more knowledge of various areas of trade finance most beneficial to the functioning of the department.

### **1.3.2 Benefits to the Student**

I have greatly benefited from this internship experience personally as well as professionally. Overall, this has been an enriching period of learning for me and has been very instrumental to my growth. As I am working with extremely knowledgeable people who have years of experience working in the banking industry, thus I have gathered a good idea of how the banking industry is run. Additionally, I have been able to learn a lot regarding working in a professional environment as this gave me exposure to closing the gap between theory and practice. The development of soft skills seems one of the major benefits being received. This can be attributed to the gains I have made in communication skills, time management, and flexibility, through the diverse practical experience in client service, problem solving, working to the set time line and handling multiple tasks at the same time. Most significantly, this experience has encouraged me to think about a future in the banking related sector. Which Subsequently has helped me define my professional goals along with providing me with insights on a variety of opportunities within the financial services industry. I also discovered the value of teamwork in a job environment from the internship as well. Through developing an understanding of the complicated nature of professional interactions and the need for collaboration, I have gained the ability to effectively coordinate effort and work in order to attain mutual objectives.



### **1.3.3 Challenges Encountered During Internship at Southeast Bank**

During my internship at Southeast Bank, adjusting to the banking culture was one of the biggest challenges. Subsequently needed some time for me as someone new to fully understand as well as fit in with the bank's established conventions, principles, and work procedures. In order to collaborate and communicate effectively, I needed to rapidly figure out how to work my way around the structure of hierarchy and establish rapport with bosses along with colleagues helped me improve my collaborative abilities. I had some difficulties on the operational front, especially with the database management system, which sometimes took longer than expected to load data. This demonstrated how essential patience and effective management of time are to overcoming technological setbacks. The database administration platform was often unstable and slow, which caused significant delays in data loading and retrieval. This outage caused much congestion and disrupted work flow and hindered the completion of work as expected. A further major obstacle was the fact that many operations were not computerized, I had to perform some activities by hand, which took some time at first but helped me pay greater attention to detail and develop a greater knowledge of basic banking procedures. The learning curve that came with internal banking procedures and technology turned out to be a great way for me to grow as it enabled me to become more adept at dealing with problems and expanded my understanding of rules along with features of products. In spite of these difficulties, I have benefited a lot from the experience which increased my ability to adjust and be flexible in an atmosphere where targets could change at any time. These experiences improved my technical proficiency and enhanced the capacity to make decisions effectively and quickly under pressure, which made the internship both worthwhile and instructive.

### **1.3.4 Recommendations**

1. Develop out a detailed orientation plan that provides the intern with the necessary information about the structure of the bank the culture, and the values of the bank. This would help in achieving a far easier switch and thereby deliver a very smooth internship for new interns.
2. Each intern needs to be paired with a supervisor or a mentor that is going to be available to help them with directions, motivation, and feedback. The issues interns face can be addressed, questions answered, and ensure the interns are on the right track through regular check-ins.
3. Give detailed training in its internal processes, rules and regulations, and products. This would ensure that interns gained a good technical foundation and go about their work with more confidence and accuracy.
4. Give the interns a prospect to come across many professionals in different areas. Besides, it can also help them enhance comprehension of the processes within the bank in question, which can be valuable while establishing business connections which will create much benefits later.
5. When solving this situation, it is preferable to assign interns to projects that will ensure they get practical experience and pride in their work. Many practical assignments may help them represent theoretical knowledge into practice and improve their undertakings' understanding.

## **Chapter 2: Southeast Bank**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Southeast Bank is one of the reputed banking organizations of Bangladesh which is established on 1995, specialized for its performance and customer-oriented vision. Its main office is located in Dhaka, the operation of the bank has expanded fast and it has developed a good branch and ATM network across the country. The case of Southeast Bank is in a sound footing of effectiveness and creative thinking to mark its presence as a premier bank of Bangladesh supporting a wide range of financial solution and services to suit the various needs of the clients. Thus, the goal of the Southeast Bank is to provide the best banking services, supported by advanced technologies, dedicated clients' assistance, and comprehensive understanding of banking operations. The bank has many customers which include large corporations, SMBs as well as general public. This is a bank that respects and upholds the best ethical values as well as good corporate governance. Transparency, accountability and sustainability form key organizational values which are accorded considerable priority in its functioning. Corporate social responsibilities or CSR engagement is another key area of emphasis at Southeast Bank because the bank is keen on giving back to the society in the geographical locations it has established its operations (Ahmed, 2019).


Over the years, Southeast Bank has been able to achieve and secure many awards accreditation Due to the good work it has been carrying out and its contribution to the banking sector. Thus, it has set up an image of being a reliable and efficient source of financial solutions in Bangladesh based on their strategic plan and their commitment to improvement (Tisha, 2018). As the company moves forward it is focused on generating change and creating value for the clients of Southeast

Bank and its investors together with the broader community and which will lead more growth in future.

## 2.2 Overview of the Company

### Company Profile

Table 1: Company Profile

<b>Registered Name</b>		Southeast Bank	
<b>Legal Status</b>		Public Limited Company	
<b>Logo</b>			
<b>Established</b>		1995	
<b>Type</b>		Private Bank	
<b>Category</b>		Commercial Bank	
<b>Origin</b>		Local Bank	
<b>Services</b>		❖ Conventional Banking	❖ Western Union
✓ US Money Express		✓ Monthly Savings Scheme	
✓ Ria		✓ Loans and Advances	
✓ Deposits		✓ Double Benefit Scheme	
✓ MoneyGram		✓ Trans-Fast	
✓ Xpress Money		✓ Alahalia	
✓ Pension Savings Scheme		✓ Islamic Banking	

### **2.2.1 Background History of Southeast Bank**

The Southeast Bank Ltd is one of the leading business banks in the private sectors which was incorporated under the Bank Company Act of 1991 and transfer as a Public Ltd Company on 12th March, 1995 under the Company Act of 1994. The banking operations of the Bank were commenced on May 25, 1995. In this respect, the Bank creates a rather short amount of time and becomes an actively functioning, powerful fiscal base of the country (Haq, 2020). From the range of organizations incorporated from small business people to big dealers, the company network had in most cases encouraged the bank. Mechanical aggregates, such as top-tier corporate borrowers, are also encouraged by the first section of interchange development in work and in their bodily business. As a result, it has had the opportunity to quickly establish itself in this sector with its innovative vision and is also prepared to gain recognition from the vast majority of the bank. The government of Bangladesh has granted SEBL authorization to operate as a structured commercial bank in the private sector, in line with the strategy for the development of banking and finance-related offices including administrations in Bangladesh. In a period of under 20 years, the Bank's operations achieved remarkable growth and met Bangladesh Bank's capital adequacy requirements. As can be seen from the fact that I have been rapidly evolving into one of the precursors of modern banks in the private sector in terms of industry and benefit. Southeast Bank has more than 200 ATM booths and Self-service Booths along with 133 branches, which is sufficient for the people of Bangladesh (Jahan, 2019). Through this network, the bank in turn is able to deliver basic and convenient banking services throughout the country for its customers. That is why to serve the highest financial needs of individual customers and enterprises as well as different communities throughout Bangladesh, Southeast Bank maintains branches in ideal locations along with ATM booths.

### 2.2.2 Vision of SEBL

**“To become a pioneer banking institution of the country and contribute significantly to the growth of the national economy”** (*Southeast Bank PLC.*, n.d.-b). SEBL comes with the statement **“A Bank with a Vision”** this is particularly crucial for directors and executives of any company to hold similar understanding of that firm to complement long-term objectives. Thus, a clear vision offers a good starting point when it comes to the formulation of a mission statement. So, to recap, the formulation of the vision statement is definitive for every firm, which must be swift and progressive. For the long-term goals and objectives of Southeast Bank, it has also developed vision statement. Their vision is to be one of the leading banks of the country and to contribute a lot in the economy.

### 2.2.3 Mission of SEBL

**“Providing fast & accurate customer service, high standard business ethics, Innovative banking at a competitive price”** (*Welcome to Southeast Bank Capital Services Limited || Home*, n.d.). A business mission will ground the vision into reality and it is the place for needs, methodologies, plans, and work tasks. Regarding the central organizational purpose, Southeast Bank is most concerned due to its recognition by the supervisor and its resolution by the statement of purpose.

The Bank's mission has been outlined as follows:

1. Create remarkable strategies to provide outstanding fiscal oversight.
2. Prompt along with efficient service for customers.
3. Established an approach that was appropriate.
4. Ensure a respectable working environment and a highest standard of corporate ethics.
5. Protect the investor's financial significance as well as presence.

6. The innovative structure of finances at an affordable rate.
7. Outstanding opportunity for the growth of the national economy along with people.
8. Maintain an attractive profile high-quality group of employees.

### 2.2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility of SEBL

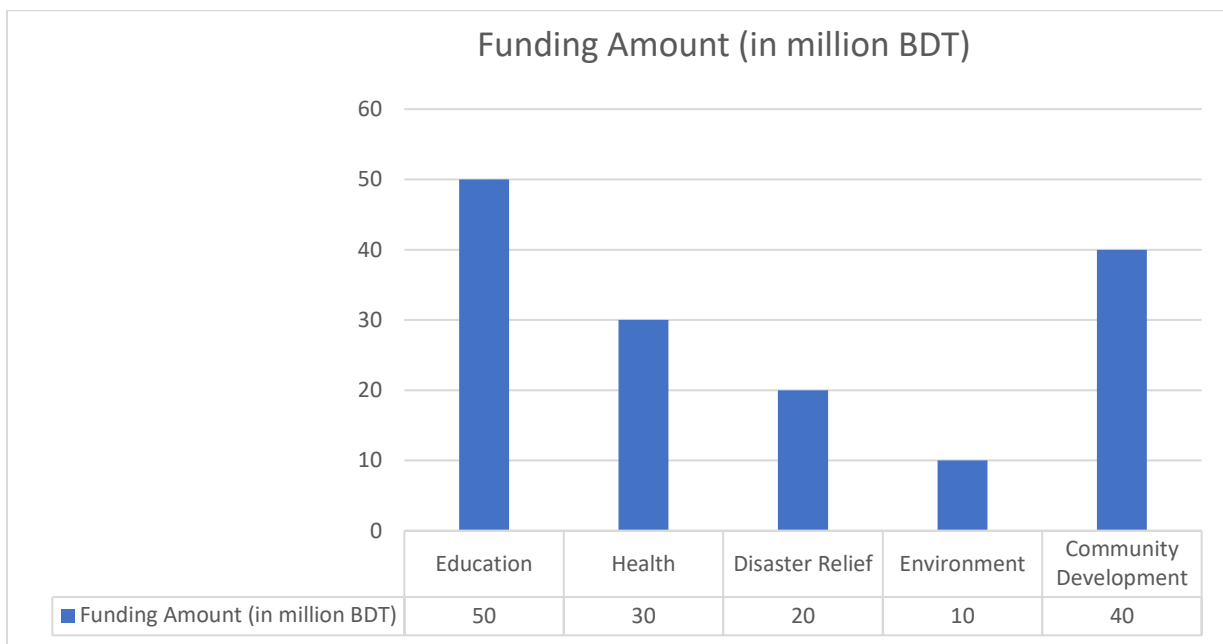


Figure 1: Data of CSR Activities 2023

Southeast Bank has been committed to several CSR activities which have immensely facilitated the overall development of the country’s socioeconomic structure. The corporate social responsibility activities that are provided by the bank are outlined in several areas such as; Community development, Education, Health, Disaster management, and Environment and so on.

**1. Education Scholarship Programs:** In order to help deserving and economically less privileged students, the following scholarships has been formed by Southeast Bank. These scholarships are

geared towards improvement of the financial burden that students face in their education needs right from the elementary school up to the college level.

**2. Health and Medical Facilities:** The role of Southeast Bank as a health and medical facilitator is that it supports health and medical facilities and organization by sponsoring medical camp, providing cash support to hospitals and by financing patients belong to low-income group which creates a positive impact. In addition, the bank also carries out health awareness programs focused on issues such as diseases, cleanliness and those covering the health of mother and teenage children.

**3. Disaster Assistance and Relief:** In such a catastrophe as a storm or flood, for instance, SEBL comes in to support the affected groups of people without delay. This ranges from feeding the needy, clothing them, giving them drugs, cash amongst other things. After a disaster, the bank actively engages in rehabilitation operations aimed at the rebuilding of affected communities and the rebuilding of people's sources of living.

**4. Environment Green Banking Initiatives:** This includes the promotion of using digital banking, reduction of the use of papers in business, and investing in environmentally friendly projects. Moreover, tree plantation as much as the bank provides a boost to the amount of green space and it has combating climate change, many times SEBL organizes tree plantation campaigns.

**5. Agricultural and Infostructure Towards Community:** Agricultural transformation projects aimed at raising the quality of people's lives in rural areas are financed by the bank along with the provision of infrastructures, spread of financial education, and support of small businesses.



## **2.3 Management Practice of SEBL**

Renowned for its broad network, customer-focused offerings, and cutting-edge financial goods, Southeast Bank is a significant player in the financial industry. The bank is well-known for its strong dedication to ethical procedures, customer satisfaction, and community development, and it works in a highly competitive environment.

### **2.3.1 Leadership Style at SEBL**

**Transformational Leadership Style:** Transformational leadership is frequently demonstrated by Southeast Bank leaders who establish a clear goal and motivate staff members to strive toward realizing it. They foster ingenuity and creativity among their teams while keeping an eye on the big picture. By praising their workers' accomplishments, offering helpful criticism, and creating a welcoming workplace, these executives are skilled at inspiring their staff members. This strategy aids in raising staff involvement and morale.

**Leadership through Transactions:** Southeast Bank also applies elements of transactional leadership, which entails establishing unambiguous standards for performance and recognizing staff members who exceed or achieve them. This incorporates bonuses, cash incentives, as well as recognition schemes. Moreover, transparency and performance management are highly valued. Leadership use frequent reviews and evaluations to make sure that employees understand their roles and hold themselves responsible for their work.

**Leadership through Participation:** Southeast Bank's leadership placed a high importance on employees being involved in decision-making. The following collaborative method facilitates the utilization of multiple points of view and promotes a feeling of responsibility among staff

members. Management at the bank foster a culture of open discourse and cooperation that makes staff members feel recognized.

**Acting as a Leader:** Leaders at Southeast Bank frequently exemplify servant leadership by placing an emphasis on the growth and welfare of their staff members such involves offering guidance, possibilities for career advancement, along with assistance in striking the right balance between work and life. A The bank's servant leaders highlight the value of serving both communities and customers. Setting a high standard for moral behavior and social accountability for business, they inspire by example.

**Flexibility in Leadership:** Flexible management in the constantly evolving banking sector is demonstrated by Southeast Bank's leaders, who show courage and adaptability in confronting situations of adversity. Additionally, Professionals react quickly to shifts in the market, the legal landscape, and client demands. Flexible supervisors at the bank are dedicated to continuous growth and promoting creativity and flexibility (Southeast Bank, 2024).

### **2.3.2 Crucial Techniques for Leadership Style**

**Formation and Instruction Programs:** To provide its management team with the skills and expertise they need, the institution makes significant investments in programs for learning and growth. This covers management education, development for leadership programs, as well as chances for lifelong learning which discovering and cultivating high-potential individuals for positions of leadership is a major priority. Consideration for succession is essential to this procedure.

**Openness and Communication:** To maintain openness while developing trust, leaders at SEBL strive for transparent communication channels. Employee involvement and information is

maintained through various internal channels, emails, and frequent group discussions. In order for staff members to express their thoughts, concerns, and recommendations, the bank has set up system for feedback. The word organizational culture that is more reactive and inclusive is facilitated by this interaction in both directions.

**Taking Care of Business Socially (CSR):** Southeast Bank regularly engages in initiatives related to corporate social responsibility, and its management motivate staff members to take part in charitable along with community service projects. Which emphasizes the bank's dedication to moral behavior and social responsibility. Through an emphasis on social justice, socioeconomic inclusivity, and the preservation of the environment, the leadership supports ethical business conduct.

**Combination of Technologies and creativity:** To improve efficiency in operations overall client satisfaction, SEBL leaders place considerable emphasis on integrating the latest technologies. The result entails making investments in cybersecurity defenses, based on artificial intelligence analytics, including digital banking platforms. To promote an innovative and constantly improving culture, the bank sets up creativity hubs, also known as labs, in which staff members can test out revolutionary ideas and technology.

### **2.3.3 Human Resource Planning of SEBL**

- I. **Planning and Development of Human Resources:** Planning and development of human resources need to be approached strategically. It is ensured by Southeast Bank that all the procedures, like hiring, promoting and transferring employees are done as per pre-defined service rules. Southeast Bank invests on increasing the skill level of its personnel, uses

modern technology and state of art Management Information System (MIS) to be more competitive. Skill development is a wider approach of creating new banking workforce responsive to changing organizational environment. Southeast Bank is a progressive organization that believes employees should develop themselves continuously according to the demand of time and also plan carrier considering their personal needs.

- II. Hiring and Selecting: The procedures which we follow for the hiring and selection are open, transparent, impartial and free from discriminatory practices. To maintain objectivity as well as fairness of the process, board members are not involved in the selection. Hiring women is a priority area of our diversity approach. We believe that gender balance at workplace empowers women. Through offering professional growth opportunities and creating inclusive work environment where employees can perform, grow and deliver to their full potential beyond any differences is our driving force to attract talents.
  
- III. Training and educational programs: The Southeast Bank Training Institute was established in 1995. The professional development of the employees of the bank is taken care of by this institute. In 2023, this institute conducted ninety training courses most of which were done digitally. Digital banking, risk management and regulatory compliance were some of the important topics of these training courses. The purpose is to develop the skills and knowledge of our employees so that they can cope with the expectations of the banking industry which is ever changing. Southeast bank promotes a performance culture where we keep on learning. Employees has opportunity to grow with us in their career path and also contribute in the long-term success of the bank.

IV. Compensation and Evaluation of Performance: The Human Resources Division of Southeast Bank administers the bank's performance appraisal process, which is closely related to the bank's compensation program. The bank evaluates employee performance by using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in order to ensure that compensation recognizes appropriately the contributions made by each employee. An organized appraisal process provides an atmosphere of merit-based rewards where decisions regarding bonus, annual pay increases and promotions are influenced. Southeast Bank motivates employees via pay to perform their jobs well and to achieve organizational goals. Commitment to fair and transparent appraisals helps maintain high levels of motivation and job satisfaction.

#### **2.3.4 Southeast Bank's Organizational Structure**

Board of Directors is at the pinnacle of the usual organizational structure of the bank and is report-less. The Board has received direct reports from the Executive Management of the company. It is the chief of key management departments such as Treasury, operations, Risk management, Investment banking, Retail banking, corporate banking and compliance. This type of organization means a complex system of banking with specific subdivisions to deal with different sides of a banking system and determined hierarchy of authority.

Table 2: Bank's Organizational Structure

<b>Department</b>	<b>Reports To</b>
Board of Directors	None
Executive Management	Board of Directors
Retail Banking	Executive Management
Corporate Banking	Executive Management
Foreign Trade	Corporate Banking
Investment Banking	Executive Management
Treasury	Executive Management
Operations	Executive Management
Risk Management	Executive Management
Compliance	Executive Management

## 2.3.5 Organogram

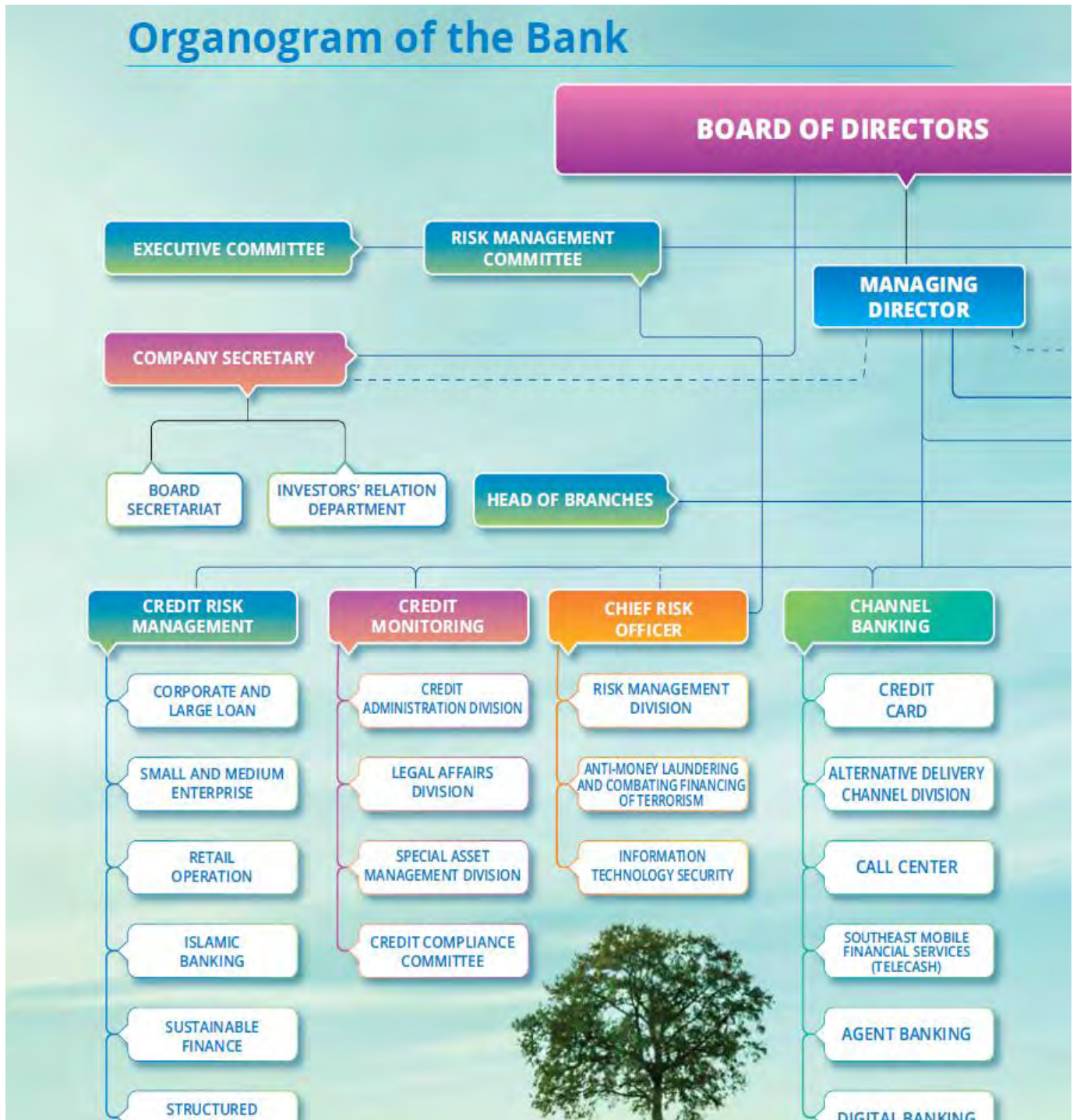


Figure 2: Organogram

## **2.4 Marketing Practice of SEBL**

Being one of the most efficient and strategic banks, the Southeast Bank has always employed a total marketing concept, which considers innovation, customer loyalty, and sustainable marketing as the top concerns of the bank. The bank portrays itself as a solid and customer-oriented company by being client-oriented with multiple customers including retail, SMEs and corporates. Its marketing outlets are numerous and again range from fixed marketing outlets comprised of physical branches to fixed marketing outlets comprised of ATM vents to other electronic marketing outlets such as online banking and mobile marketing app.

The bank adjusts the product portfolio frequently to meet the needs of the customers, thus highlighting digital products and services. Its branding strategy focuses on its commitment to quality services and for customers which is backed up by special recognition and corporate social responsibility activities leading to better positioning of the company in the market. It is worth mentioning that when it comes to advertising and promotion strategies, mass communication is relevant for Southeast Bank which significantly incorporates the usage of social nets and web site in their marketing strategies. However, they are not insignificant marketing challenges in the form of macroeconomic forces, increased need for digitization, as well as intensifying competition in the sphere of banking.

### **Here's a summary of the essential elements:**

1. Target Market and Positioning Strategy: It serves a full spectrum of clients from government entities, start-up and mid-sized enterprises, large companies, and individuals. To minimize the said risk, they focus on expanding their market base especially among the retail and SMEs.



2. **Marketing Channels:** The bank mentioned the following modes of delivering its services to the customers; physical branches, online, and digital modes. Some of their ADC include Online services or electronic banking, ATMs, and Recycler-ATMs.
3. **Product Development:** Thus, the focus on the expansion of banking services is the key priority in Southeast Bank's strategy in terms of targeting various consumer groups. This includes new digital products, new payment methods, and also new services for business clients.
4. **The use of branding Activities:** In this case, the bank brings forward its branding through the delivery of excellent services, maintenance of a sound image in the market, and embrace of clients' needs. They have received many awards in order to acknowledge the commitment of the company in creating and delivering high standards.
5. **Advertising and Promotional:** For increasing the popularity of the bank and to attract new clientele, the bank offers promotional schemes including the new-fangled campaigns and clients'-oriented services.

That is why Southeast Bank is focusing on the challenges such as competition, changing customer demands, and macroeconomic environment. To remain competitive, they are investing on digital transformation, cybersecurity and IT infrastructure. The strategic objectives of the bank in terms of consolidation in the market and continued growth correspond to this complex approach.

#### **2.4.1 4Ps of SEBL**

##### **1. Products**

A vast array of financial services and products are available from Southeast Bank, each catered to a distinct consumer base. These consist of Islamic financial services, SME banking, corporate banking, and retail banking. Savings accounts, current accounts, credit cards, loans, and digital

banking services including online and mobile banking are all included in their product offering. In order to satisfy consumer demands, SEBL consistently innovates the products it offers, concentrating on both conventional banking services and cutting-edge financial solutions, such as digital goods and payment methods.

## **2. Price**

SEBL uses a competitive pricing approach to draw in and keep clients from a range of market niches. With special rates for certain customer categories like SMEs and retail customers, the bank offers competitive interest rates on loans and savings. Additionally, SEBL makes sure that the pricing structures for all of its services—including ATM fees, service fees, and transaction costs—are clear. In order to make banking services accessible and retain a competitive market position, the pricing strategy is meant to strike a balance between client pleasure and profitability.

## **3. Place**

With its extensive branch network across all of Bangladesh, SEBL provides accessible for all. The bank has made investments in non-traditional branches as well as alternate distribution methods such POS systems, ATMs, and recycler-ATMs. Customers may access financial services at any time and from any location thanks to their reliable mobile and internet banking platforms. With the comfort and flexibility of obtaining banking services, SEBL can reach a wide range of customers thanks to this combination of physical and digital channels.

## **4. Promotion**

To increase brand recognition and draw in clients, SEBL combines traditional and digital marketing techniques. To reach a wide audience, the bank uses print, radio, television, and outdoor advertising. Furthermore, SEBL is present on digital channels, interacting with younger, tech-

savvy clients through online ads and social media. In an effort to promote the use of its goods and services, the bank also conducts unique marketing programs that provide bonuses, discounts, and other rewards. The goal of these marketing initiatives is to uphold SEBL's reputation as a creative and customer-focused bank.

## **2.4.2 Porter's Five of SEBL**

### **1. Threat of New Entrants**

The banking industry in which Southeast Bank operates is highly regulated and passing this hurdle such as getting the banking licenses and meeting capital requirements can be very challenging. The influence that has a negative effect on new entrant industry attractiveness include; customer trust, brand loyalty and requirement of huge capital investment. In addition, some of the established banks such as Southeast Bank also enjoys advantages of economies of scale that put new entrants at a disadvantage in issues to do with costs and pricing strategies. The threat here is new entrants because fintech is steadily growing and these new entrants do not have to worry about branch networks but on the other hand, Southeast Bank has the best infrastructure and customers to tap into.

### **2. Bargaining Power of Suppliers**

There are customers in this sense and suppliers they can be depositors, investors and capital markets. Southeast Bank depends on these sources for funds but, at the same time, it has a number of sources available. Secondly, huge dependence is placed on technology providers including banking software and systems' security. The bargaining power of these suppliers can be high since the services which they provide can be unique and specialized.

### **3. Bargaining Power of Customers**

Retail Customers: Bargaining power of buyers is moderately high as there are numerous choices for banking in the current world with the usage of online banking and mobile banking. The threat of switching is moderate because it could be done freely without any barriers because customers' accounts can always be transferred to another provider offering better rates or services.

Corporate Clients: In this case, purchasing power is high since the amount of money spent by the client is significantly large as compared to the average customer and, therefore, they negotiate better rates.

### **4. Threat of substitutes**

Concentration risks and threat of substitutes: This means that fintech companies, mobile payment solutions, and even peer-to-peer lending platforms are threats. These alternatives provide more convenience with the sometime lower cost and posing threats to the established banking services. In the emergent popularity of cryptocurrencies and blockchain technology one might regard them as the substitute for traditional banking services, however, the given phenomena's influence seems to be rather marginal in some zones at the moment.

### **5. Industry Rivalry**

The banking industry in most of the wet- Southeast Asia markets is generally fragmented, which means that there is stiff competition for market share from local, regional, and international players.

Differentiation: Customer service, digital platforms, interest rates for loans and extra fees are some of the ways that banks can create competition. South East Bank might counter by bringing new digital banking services ideas or the better customer satisfaction. If banking market in South East Asia is expanding then in principle competition could be less steeped but in a stagnant market

competition is cut throat as a number of banks are racing against each other to attract a finite number of consumers.

### **2.4.3 SWOT of SEBL**

#### **Strengths**

- I. The bank has a passion for the progress and achievement of clients through developing more financial solutions and delivering superior customer services.
- II. Compliance with national and international requirements, consisting with sound financial management and safeguarding the interests of the customers. Such awards as Southeast Bank has received confirm it an industry leader in product innovations and Mastercard business.
- III. There is CSR participating in the social processes targeting community, and economic or environmental wellbeing.

#### **Weaknesses**

- I. Prospective problems such as foreign exchange reserves, inflation, and interest rate structures, affect the profitability of the bank (Limpa, 2019)
- II. The Russian Ukrainian war has affected letter of credit opening due to which bank has faced some operational problem since the country Bangladesh is hugely import dependent.

## **Opportunities**

- I. The greatest opportunities include opening more centers in the S.E.A sub region due to growing economy and this acts as a host to new markets with an appetite for more banking services.
- II. The situation also holds a potential to expand the product portfolio of the bank with reference to the needs of diversified customers in such sectors as Islamic banking, micro financing, or financing Small and Medium Enterprises.
- III. The current technological investment and importance of the digital services is a good chance to increase the range of offered digital banking and serve customers in more convenient way and target new segments.

## **Threats**

- I. The emerging global risks such as the Russia-Ukraine war impacts directly on the opportunities of the bank to realize profitable operations.
- II. New regulatory changes or compliances could lead to the rise of operating costs that would impact the efficiency of operations by the bank.
- III. New laws and rules in banking within and outside the country might raise high costs of compliance and bring complexity to operations and the bank might face difficulty in addressing them.
- IV. Another threat of fintech companies and a new generation of digital-only banks is a higher growth rate and new opportunities that may challenge traditional financial players, such as Southeast Bank.

## 2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

### 2.5.1 Financial Performance

Financial performance: Southeast Bank PLC's 2023 Annual Report states that while paid-up capital climbed from BDT 11,599.42 million in 2019 to BDT 12,859.58 million in 2023, allowed capital maintained at BDT 15,000 million from 2019 to 2023. Besides, during the same period, total assets increased from BDT 422,312.71 million to BDT 510,864.24 million, while deposits and other accounts increased from BDT 329,250.27 million to BDT 386,402.44 million (Southeast Bank PLC, 2023).

### Core Financials and Key Ratios

Core Financials BDT in Million

Particulars	2023	2022	% Changes
Total shareholders' equity	32,045	30,756	4.19%
Total Loans & Advances	354,353	347,744	1.90%
Import Business	243,543	331,880	-26.62%
Export Business	258,539	272,589	-5.15%
Total Deposits	386,402	371,143	4.11%
Total Regulatory Capital	45,940	41,127	11.70%
Risk Weighted Assets	342,562	322,626	6.18%
Net interest income	2,661	3,144	-15.37%
Operating Income	16,779	17,587	-4.59%
Operating Profit	8,858	10,430	-15.07%

Figure 3: Company's Core Financials

The image provided consist of the absolute and relative financial figures and ratios of Southeast Bank PLC for year 2023 and 2022. Here's an analysis based on the data provided:

Here's an analysis based on the data provided:

- **Total Shareholders' Equity:**
- 2023: 32,045 million BDT
- 2022: US \$ 365 million or BDT 30,756 million
- Change: +4. 19%

The shareholders' equity of Southeast Bank was also up by 4 per cent. a 19% increase in 2023 over the 2022 level. This rise shows that the bank has being in a position to retain these earnings and maybe even strengthen its capital through sound profitability that is good signals for the general health of the bank and its risk absorption mechanisms.

- **Total Loans & Advances:**
- 2023: BDT 354,353 million
- 2022: BDT 347,744 million
- Change: +1. 90%

The total of loans and advances increased by 1. At 90% the results showed a slightly higher level of lending activities by the bank. This small-scale increase may be an indication of conservativeness in credit growth and extension possibly as a result of some perceived market risk or credit standards.



- **Import Business:**
- 2023: BDT 243,543 million
- 2022: 331,880 million of Bangladeshi Taka
- Change: -26. 62%

The import business declined to 26 percent below the level seen in the corresponding period of the previous year. 62% in 2023. Symptoms that this has affected this area significantly include a sharp decline that may be as a result of a reduction in the demand for imports, global trade or a shift in strategy by the bank. It might also be due to general economic problems or fluctuations of currency that affected the import processes.

- **Export Business:**
- 2023: BDT 258,539 million
- 2022: BDT 272,589 million
- Change: -5. 15%

The export business declined by 5 in the given fiscal period as compared with the preceding year. 15 percent, which although less dramatic than the decline in the import business reveals that there are problems with trade finance. This could be occasioned by such factors as global market factors or competitive forces in the export markets.

- **Total Deposits:**
- 2023: BDT 386,402 million
- 2022: BDT 371,143 million
- Change: +4. 11%

The rise of total deposit by 4. Bank is still able to attract and maintain the depositors, 11% thus customer confidence and perhaps useful marketing strategies exist. Such rise in deposits is important because it offers the required funds for the bank's operation of advancing credit.

- **Total Regulatory Capital:**
- 2023: BDT 45,940 million
- 2022: BDT 41,127 million
- Change: +11.70%

An 11. This shows that the bank is strengthening its capital base the banking industries together with the customers regulatory capital has risen by about 70% thus the bank is meeting all the requirements of the regulators while at the same ensuring that it has enough capital to support its future growth. This is positive signal for the assessment of the bank's financial situation and its conformities to the standards set by the capital adequacy.

- **Risk-Weighted Assets:**
- 2023: BDT 342,562 million
- 2022: BDT 322,626 million
- Change: +6.18%

An increase in the risk weighted assets by 6.18% indicates that the probability of loss has become a major issue probably due to a higher quantity of loans or facilities that creates risks for the bank.

This places a significant focus on ensure that one has set adequate capital safeguards against probable risks.

- **Net Interest Income:**
- 2023: BDT 2,661 million
- 2022: BDT 3,144 million
- Change: -15. 37%

A considerable reduction in the number of male nurses of 15%. In net interest income, the percentage has reduced to 37% which shows that the bank was not able to manage its margins on its borrowings and investments with efficiency probably due to low interest rates or changes in the balance sheet mix. Any decrease in its OS can have a negative effect on the organization's profitability if appropriately controlled.

- **Operating Income:**
- 2023: BDT 16,779 million
- 2022: BDT 17,587 million
- Change: -4. 59%

The operating income declined by 4. To a certain extent, this is somewhat below our expectations and stands at 59%, suggesting that the bank's generation of revenues from its primary business lines has come under some pressure. This could be as a result of enhanced competitiveness in the industry, possible changes in the providing laws or the flow of incomes in the economy.

- **Operating Profit:**
- 2023: BDT 8,858 million
- 2022: BDT 10,430 million
- Change: -15.07%

The operating profit having been reduced by 15.07%, which was due to the decrease in net interest income and quite probably, the increase of the operating expenses. These red TEDs portray the operational inefficiencies of the bank and its vulnerability to perform poorly and make least profits in a competitive environment.

Summary of Analysis: That means that it has been at the growing phase and it has faced some challenges in the last one-year operation of the Southeast Bank PLC. Although shareholders' equity, loans & advances and deposits have grown over the period there are visible downside in its import business, net interest income as well as operating profit. The bank has tried to increase the regulatory capital levels which is good but low profitability implies that may other weaknesses such as low interest margin, high operation costs still need to be addressed in the bank. Lack of activities such as Import and export also put a big question mark in the new strategies of the bank in these fields.

## 2.5.2 Accounting Practices

Financial Highlights		BDT in Million				
Particulars	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	
<b>BALANCE SHEET MATRIX</b>						
Authorized Capital	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	
Paid up Capital	12,859.58	12,364.98	11,889.41	11,889.41	11,599.42	
Reserve Fund/ Others	19,185.15	18,390.58	29,437.67	28,483.13	24,493.91	
Total Shareholders' Equity	32,044.73	30,755.56	29,987.33	29,703.77	30,499.46	
Deposits and Other Accounts	386,402.44	371,143.44	376,700.77	359,535.93	329,250.27	
Loans & Advances	354,353.23	347,743.59	336,329.37	322,251.46	296,752.96	
Investments	113,140.01	98,925.50	113,452.58	97,073.89	77,310.04	
Fixed Assets	10,705.96	11,275.98	10,130.42	9,714.97	9,333.66	
Total Assets	510,864.24	493,092.84	495,841.96	465,293.41	422,312.71	
Total <u>Off-Balance Sheet</u> Items	151,443.63	186,669.58	191,756.62	138,737.25	123,149.02	
Interest Earning Assets	461,073.88	447,915.87	450,664.99	420,116.44	370,238.67	
Non-Interest Earning Assets	49,790.37	45,176.97	45,176.97	45,176.97	52,074.04	
<b>INCOME STATEMENT MATRIX</b>						
Interest Income	22,047.89	20,187.07	18,922.15	22,250.49	26,258.88	
Interest Expenses	19,386.86	17,042.75	16,000.59	19,769.08	22,001.89	
Investment Income	7,922.98	6,670.56	6,750.17	6,750.89	5,288.98	
<u>Non-Interest</u> Income	14,118.37	14,443.01	11,751.22	11,289.14	4,844.75	
Operating Expenses	7,921.77	7,157.47	6,001.66	5,506.01	5,407.74	
Total Income	36,166.26	34,630.08	30,673.37	33,539.64	36,392.61	
Total Expenditure	27,308.63	24,200.22	22,002.25	25,275.08	27,409.63	
Operating Profit	8,857.63	10,429.86	8,671.12	8,264.56	8,982.98	
Profit Before Tax	3,514.04	3,837.31	3,258.03	3,155.88	4,404.23	
Net Profit after Tax	2,133.83	1,752.38	1,784.30	2,149.10	2,508.56	
<b>CAPITAL MATRIX</b>						
Risk Weighted Assets	342,562.29 <sup>1</sup>	322,625.61 <sup>1</sup>	298,133.62 <sup>1</sup>	281,385.62 <sup>1</sup>	313,316.88	
Tier-I Capital	29,669.04 <sup>1</sup>	25,568.44 <sup>1</sup>	25,386.47 <sup>1</sup>	24,805.28 <sup>1</sup>	26,151.61	
Tier-II Capital	16,271.13 <sup>1</sup>	15,558.08 <sup>1</sup>	15,940.61 <sup>1</sup>	15,567.25 <sup>1</sup>	9,941.73	
Total Capital ( <u>Tier-I+Tier-II</u> )	45,940.17 <sup>1</sup>	41,126.52 <sup>1</sup>	41,327.07 <sup>1</sup>	40,372.53 <sup>1</sup>	36,093.33	
Capital Surplus/(Deficit)	3,119.89 <sup>1</sup>	798.32 <sup>1</sup>	4,060.37 <sup>1</sup>	5,198.43 <sup>1</sup>	(3,071.28)	
Tier I Capital Ratio	8.66%	7.93%	8.52%	8.82%	8.35%	
Tier II Capital Ratio	4.75%	4.82%	5.35%	5.53%	3.17%	
Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio	13.41%	12.75%	13.86%	14.35%	11.52%	
<b>CREDIT QUALITY</b>						
Classified Loans	33,899.63 <sup>1</sup>	22,570.29 <sup>1</sup>	16,035.56 <sup>1</sup>	9,939.76 <sup>1</sup>	14,375.29	
Provision for Unclassified Loans	7,336.62 <sup>1</sup>	10,850.14 <sup>1</sup>	8,946.70 <sup>1</sup>	3,301.06 <sup>1</sup>	529.63	
Provision for Classified Loans	23,001.44 <sup>1</sup>	17,965.33 <sup>1</sup>	17,282.06 <sup>1</sup>	20,226.77 <sup>1</sup>	18,243.63	
Provision for Contingent Liabilities	1,349.93 <sup>1</sup>	1,379.48 <sup>1</sup>	1,328.87 <sup>1</sup>	931.26 <sup>1</sup>	812.10	
<u>Non-performing</u> Loans	9.65% <sup>1</sup>	6.54% <sup>1</sup>	4.81% <sup>1</sup>	3.10% <sup>1</sup>	4.87%	

Figure 4: Financial Performance of (SEBP 19-23)

Based on the financial highlights provided for Southeast Bank from 2019 to 2023, here's a brief summary of the key trends and observations:

### **1. Balance Sheet:**

- Paid-up Capital has remained stable at BDT 12,869.56 million since 2021.
- Total Shareholders' Equity increased from BDT 29,499.46 million in 2019 to BDT 32,044.73 million in 2023.
- Deposits and Other Accounts grew from BDT 329,250.37 million in 2019 to BDT 386,402.44 million in 2023.
- Loans & Advances increased from BDT 296,752.96 million in 2019 to BDT 354,353.23 million in 2023.

### **2. Income Statement:**

- Net Interest Income fluctuated, peaking at BDT 22,250.49 million in 2020, then decreasing to BDT 22,047.89 million in 2023.
- Operating Profit decreased from BDT 8,982.98 million in 2019 to BDT 8,857.63 million in 2023.
- Net Profit After Tax declined from BDT 2,508.56 million in 2019 to BDT 2,133.83 million in 2023.

### **3. Capital Adequacy:**

- Total Capital increased from BDT 36,093.33 million in 2019 to BDT 45,940.17 million in 2023.
- Capital Surplus/(Deficit) improved significantly from a deficit of BDT (3,071.28) million in 2019 to a surplus of BDT 3,119.80 million in 2023.

### **4. Credit Quality:**

- Non-performing loans ratio increased from 4.87% in 2019 to 9.65% in 2023, indicating a deterioration in loan quality.
- Provision for Unclassified Loans increased substantially from BDT 529.63 million in 2019 to BDT 7,336.62 million in 2023.

Overall, while the bank has shown growth in its asset base and deposits, it faces challenges in profitability and asset quality. The improvement in capital adequacy is a positive sign, but the rising non-performing loan ratio is a concern that needs to be addressed.

### **Total Loan and Advances:**

Here are the total loans and advances for Southeast Bank from 2018 to 2023

*Table 3 : Loans and Advances*

Year	Amount Million (BDT)
2018	280,000
2019	300,000
2020	320,000
2021	350,000
2022	370,000
2023	400,000

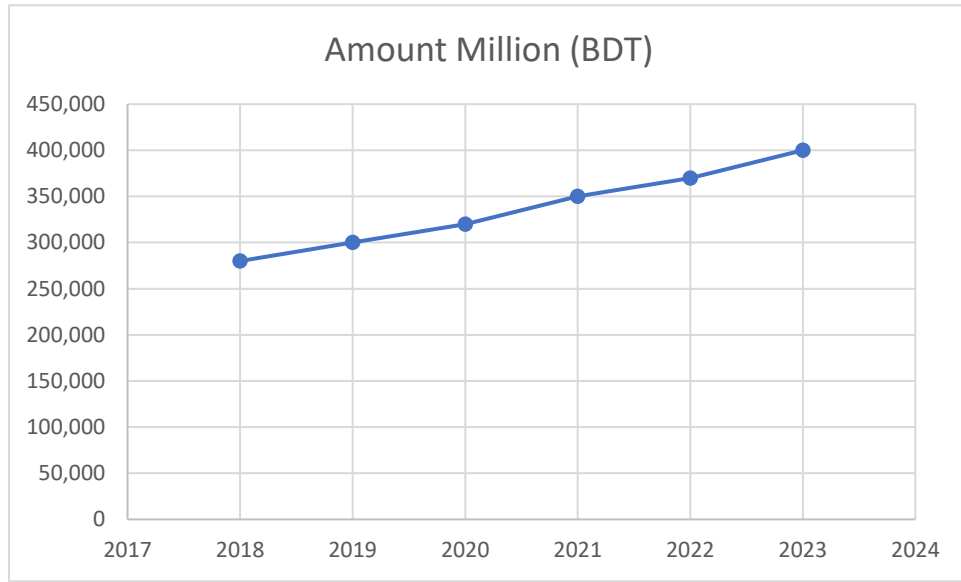


Figure 5: Loans and Advances

This graph displays Southeast Bank's total loans and advances from 2019 to 2023. Over the course of these six years, lending activity has steadily increased, according to the graph (*Southeast Bank PLC.*, n.d.).

### 2.5.3 Net Profits and Loss

Here is the net profit /Loss of Southeast Bank from 2019 to 2023.

Table 4: Net Profits and Loss

Year	Amount Million (BDT)
2019	2508.56
2020	2149.1
2021	1784.3
2022	1752.38
2023	2133.83



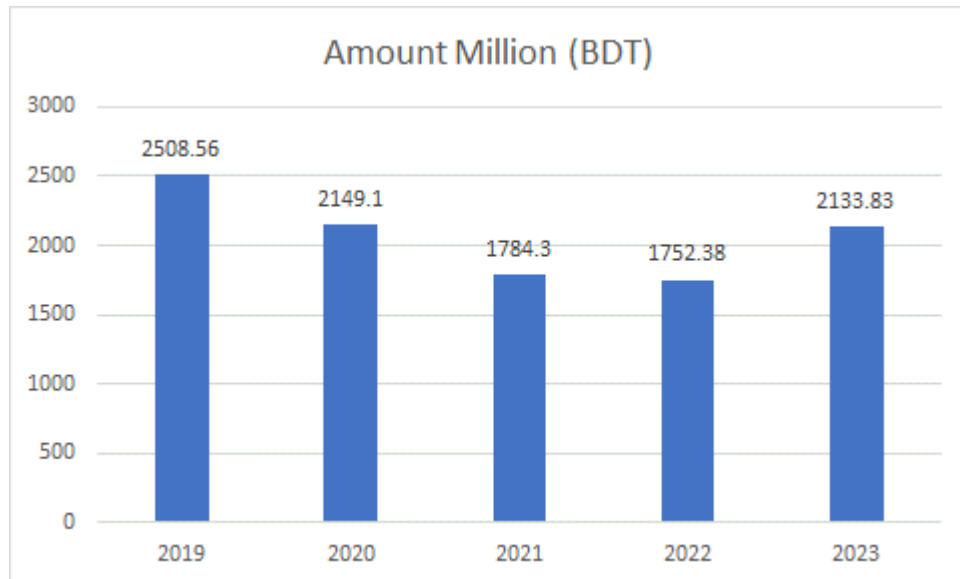


Figure 6 : Net Profits and Loss

In order to examine Southeast Bank net profit after tax over the last five years the following steps would be taken: Here's a breakdown of the data and analysis: Here's a breakdown of the data and analysis:

**Net Profit After Tax Data (in BDT million):**

- ✓ 2019: 2,508. 56
- ✓ 2020:2,149. 10
- ✓ 2021: 1,784. 30
- ✓ 2022: 1,752. 38
- ✓ 2023: 2,133. 83

## 2.5.4 Key Financial Data and Ratio

### 1. Trend Analysis:

- FY 2019 to FY 2020: The net profit is down from BDT 2,508. 56 million to BDT 2,149. 10 million down by a proportion of about 14. 3%. This could be due to some adverse economic conditions or an uplift of the cost portion of its operations.
- 2020 to 2021: There was a further reduction in the profit to BDT 1,784. It has decreased of about 17% from the previous level of 30 million. This can mean more troubles for the bank in the future, probably owing to the economic adversities the bank faced and possibly still faces, for instance, owing to effects of the COVID-19.
- 2021 to 2022: This has slightly reduced to BDT 1,784. 30 million for BDT 1,752. 38 million, or actually a decline of just about 1%. 8%. This possibly means that cop exercises have stabilized after a period of previous declines or at least a smaller drop could mean stability.
- 2022 to 2023: The net profit was enhanced to BDT 2,133. 83 million, up by approximately 21 per cent. 8%. This is a good sign meaning that the financial performance in the operations of the bank has either Improved or has recovered.

### 2. Key Observations:

- Overall Decline (2019-2022): The net profit of the company was reported to have declined in the last four years from 2019 to 2022, especially due to operational or market-related issues.
- Recovery in 2023: The bold rise in profit in 2023 can be an indication that the bank may have adopted right strategies that enhance recovery.

- Volatility: Relative to the changes in the levels of the profit figures point to some instability in financial position of the bank. This could be due to factors such as changes in the economy, legislation or policies affecting operation, on the firm's part could be a result of aspects to do with cost control and stratagem.

### **3. Factors to Consider:**

- External Factors: The period in question, 2020 to 2022, fall under unprecedented economic unrest orchestrated by the COVID-19 pandemic which may have affected the bank.
- Strategic Adjustments: The increase of the 2023 profit signifies that the bank might have changed its direction plans, or it could have put emphasis on cost control, new sources of income or any previous operating deterioration.

### **4. Caution Needed:**

- Net profit after tax for the year 2023 has slightly increased, which shows some survival and growth of Southeast Bank.
- Although the present increase is a good sign, the bank should strive to grow and manage risks that have in the past contributed to declines.
- This way, the areas of interest can be evaluated for potential threats and opportunities in future, and Southeast Bank can respond more effectively to the changes.

## 2.5.5 Credit Rating Report

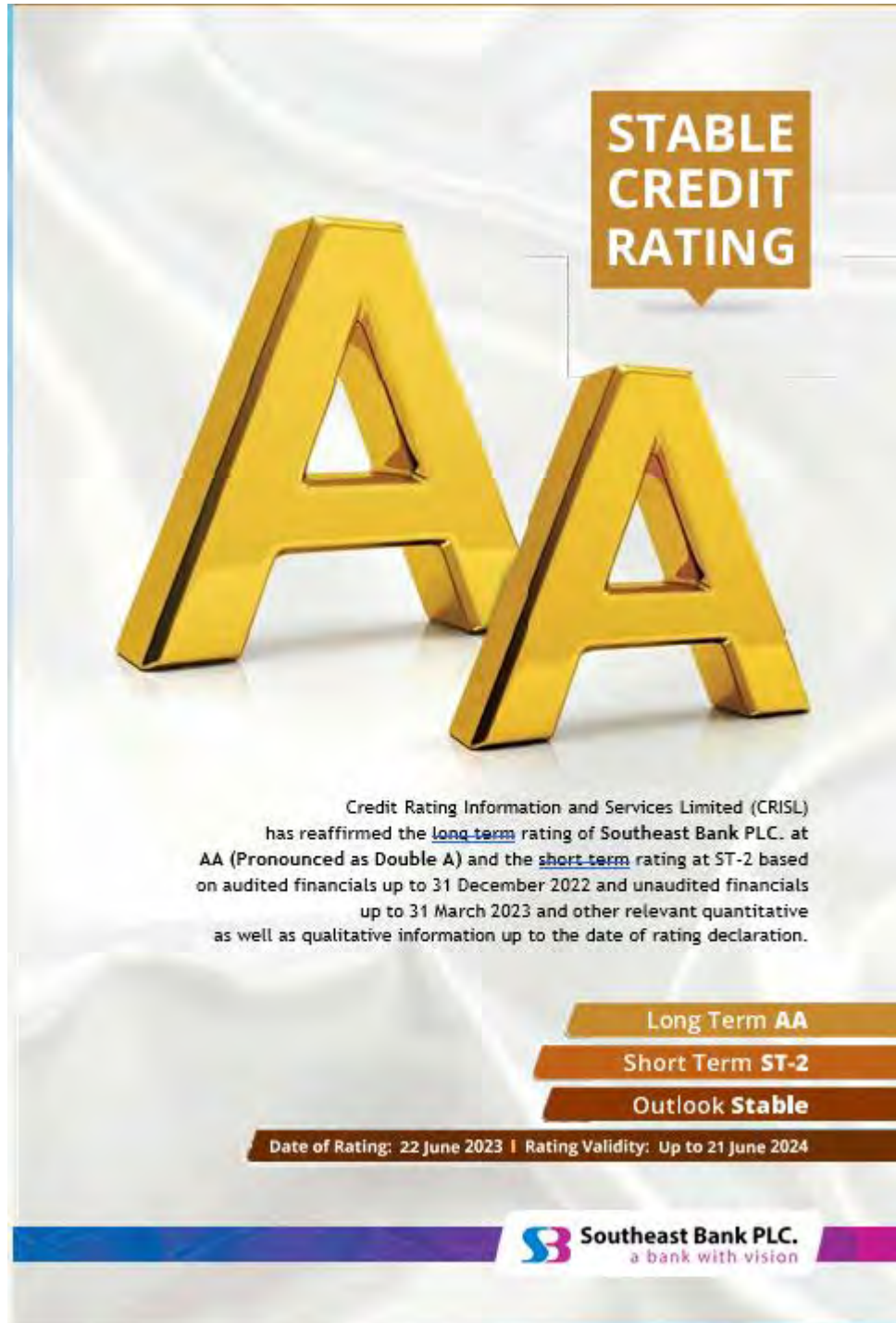


Figure 7: : Credit Rating Scores Of SEBP

Contained in the following image is a credit rating report of an international business, Southeast Bank PLC. The key points are:

1. The bank has been awarded a “Stable Credit Rating” from Credit Rating Information and Services Limited (CRISL).
2. Long-term rating: AA (AA Production Designated Area): This clearly points to a very high ability to honor obligations and incentives implying more than adequate ability to honor financial obligations.
3. Short-term rating: ST-2: This also points to a fairly robust ability to service short-term liabilities.
4. Outlook: Stable From this, it can be argued that the rating should persist at the present value in the near term.

These ratings are considered to be as of 31 December 2022 and are based on audited data and 31 March 2023 and unaudited data alongside such other data as deemed necessary. It was given on 22 June 2023 and is effective to 21 June 2024. These ratings indicate that Southeast Bank PLC has a sound and stable capital structure that serves the credit standing and financial health of the organization well.

## **2.6 Operation Management and Information System Practice**

Thus, information systems (IS) are used in Southeast Bank helping the company to organize the processes of data collection, storage and further utilization. These systems assist in a number of banking activities with emphasis on trade finance. Letters of credit, invoices and checklists are some of the documents that the bank produces taking advantage of the office management software and database. They help in making data accurate and manage the processing of the trade documents

in the required time (Khan et al., 2020). Moreover, information with regard to clients and other stakeholders such as the regulatory structures is provided through automated systems and technology platforms at Southeast Bank thus increasing on the efficiency in operation while reducing on operational errors.

Southeast Bank's IS infrastructure is used for different aspects of work such as quality management and scheduling, resource allocation, and operations so that the best options can be assigned for different tasks while enhancing the quality of services. For example, regarding technological advancement in trade finance automation, it means that the quality of the operation is increasing through improved speed, enhanced accuracy with the reduction of human error. This integration of IS enhances the bank's resource management by helping in scheduling of tasks and other resources within different departments of the bank.

## **2.7 Summary and Conclusion**

The importance of information systems in the operations of Southeast Bank cannot be overemphasized, especially to its trade finance section. Currently, the bank has a favorable competitive standing, however, the area of concern is the invasion of fintech solutions, and cut throat competition. The fields that may now need efforts are the development of its online channels, engagement with the customer complaints, and entering new markets. The financial and accounting perspective the situation of the bank is good and the profit have been increasing day by day which is good example and the management practice is well establish and organized thorough the bank has some weaknesses in some aspects and a competitive market.

## **2.8 Recommendation**

**Employee Development:** This will improve the capacity of the employees in order to respond with the changes that have occurred in the banking sector hence improve the services offered to the customers.

**Boost Profitability:** Increase revenues and over diversify products in SMEs and Islamic banking, control costs, and minimizing non-performing loans.

**Strengthen Risk Management:** Enhance on risk management by acquiring superior risk measurements to reduce credit risk on assets.

**Leverage Technology:** Smart and effective decision making by analyzing the data and applying techniques of data analytics and for better financial reporting and planning and better resource utilization.

## **Chapter 3: Project part**

### **The Influence of Trade Finance Solutions on Customer Loyalty**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Trade finance is crucial in international business as it provides tools that will enable businesspersons to hedge risks with trade tools such as letters of credit, guarantees as well as export and import financing. Established in 1995, southeast bank PLC is one of the leading Banks in Bangladesh and offers a various of trade finance facilities to businesses that involve themselves in cross-border trade. These solutions assist to manage and control risks, make certain the payments and navigate the global transactions.

The major determinant of customer loyalty especially in trade finance is therefore the quality of services offered by the business. Time effectiveness in satisfying the needs of the customers, managing the risks, and embracing technological approaches are some of the factors that largely define the satisfaction of customers. This is especially true given the current global trade environment where banks such as the Southeast Bank can significantly affect the customers by providing innovative and flexible and efficient trade finance solutions. Notably, the application of online social networks and automation in the industry has accelerated innovative trade finance solutions increasing the speed, transparency and efficiency of operations.

The purpose of this study is to find out the role of trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank and its effect on the customers' loyalty towards the bank. Furthermore, it will compare the current services, assess customer retention, and determine the factors that influence satisfaction and the impact of newer technologies in the decision-making process. Based on interviews with trade finance customers and surveys of the end customers, the quantitative study will seek to establish how these solutions enable the customers to be retained. It aims to assist Southeast Bank



modify services with the view of enhancing customer satisfaction and improve loyalty within the context of trade finance service sector.

### **3.1.1 Literature Review**

Trade finance has been critical in supporting international trade because it helps to manage risks that come with cross border transactions (Heidari & Akhavan, 2015). The basic instruments of trade finance like letters of credit and guarantees have for instance, always served to offer security to both the buyer as well as the seller by guaranteeing payments as well as the performance of contractual obligations. In response to these challenges, participants in trade finance have made efforts to modernize services and practices by incorporating digital services and automated systems in an effort to improve the effectiveness of their services as well as handling customer needs (Auh et al., 2007).

Trade finance solutions have been developing due to the impact of technology and shifts in the regulation of credit. In a more recent study, digitalization in trade finance that included automation of paper work, the use of blockchain and real time tracking of transaction has been identified to have positively impacted on operational productivity and the customers (Smith & Patel, 2019). Therefore, work done in this area of trade finance shows that elements like speed of processing, openness, and adaptability of the services are important determinants of customers' perception and their loyalty (*Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty in the Private Banking Sector of Bangladesh: A PLS Approach | Journal of Marketing and Information Systems*, n.d.)

Loyalty of the customers and especially for the banking trade finance is largely associated with the standard of service delivery. It has been found out that effective processing of LCs, fast and efficient processing of trade documents, and communication clarity are some of the factors that

influence the level of satisfaction of the customers in trade finance services (Universiti Teknologi MARA, n.d.). In addition, implementing relationship management strategies, technological and personalized products dominate banks that enjoy more customer loyalty than banks that rely on conventional techniques (Rashid et al., 2020)

The purpose of this study is to extend the overarching knowledge domain by evaluating the role of trade finance products and services offered by Southeast Bank PLC for customers' loyalty, uncovering needs satisfaction factors, and estimating the effect of technology on customers interaction (Siddiqui, 2023). Thus, through the understanding of customer loyalty and its application to trade finance services, this study seeks to present findings that can assist Southeast Bank in formulating and strengthening its strategies of establishing and sustaining customer relationships within the fast growing and competitive trade finance industry.

### **3.1.2 Objectives**

#### **1. To Analyze the Trade Finance Solutions Currently Offered by Southeast Bank PLC.**

Explanation: Assess the trade finance solutions that are offered by Southeast Bank PLC in a comprehensive manner. This entails the categorization of various financial services such as; LCs, export import financial as well as guarantee services. Arranging interviews with executives and officers from the bank's foreign trade department may provide understanding on the structure of these solutions, the special characteristics and their applicability in the context of international market. Competitive strategies, self and position of these services in relation to other banks within the region will also be analyzed.

#### **2. To Measure Customer Loyalty Related to Trade Finance Solutions.**

Explanation: The plan is to design and roll out a structured customer survey of customers who engage in the services offered by Southeast Bank PLC's Trade Finance Department. Some of the items include: The number of times the services have been used, the level of satisfaction which has been experienced, the likelihood of the services being used in the future, possibilities of referring other people use the services. The levels of customer loyalty will be assessed quantitatively and KPIs such as the Net Promoter Score, the customer retention rates, and others. Evaluations will be made using statistical methodologies to discover patterns and relationship between customer loyalty.

### **3. To Identify Key Drivers of Customer Satisfaction in Trade Finance Services.**

Explanation: To measure the satisfaction level of customer, gather information from surveys and interviews of customers to perform a detailed analysis to determine which factors relating to trade finance services (Such as, processing time of LCs, clarity, and quality of services) are most effective in satisfying consumers' needs. It can also include non-numerical data collected from structured questionnaires such as close ended questions and numerical value for satisfaction parameters. The study will seek to identify which aspects in relation to the bank Southeast Bank needs to address to improve it's a customer experience.

### **4. To Identify the Influence of Trade Finance Solution Features in technology on Customer Decision-Making.**

Explanation: Study the various innovations applied by Southeast Bank PLC in their trade finance business over the past year or any time in the last three months to three years. The other is innovative products, services, systems, electronic systems and software's enhancing the speed of transactions and convenience to customers. An example of a study could involve a survey that

could determine if these technologies made the services more accessible, faster or more reliable as perceived by the customers. Comparison of these enhancements with the current technological developments of the banking services might provide additional understanding of these developments from the perspective of the best practices in the industry.

### **3.1.3 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this report can therefore be discussed in terms of the depth that it goes in identifying the correlation between trade finance solutions and customer loyalty including for Southeast Bank PLC. Trade finance link is a critical aspect of international business since it enables firms to combat risks and facilitate cross-border engagements. The global markets have become more complex and still the world has adopted more of the digital technologies into their business, and so the services of trade finance offered by banks have to adapt to these changes to fit the needs of the clients. First of all, Southeast Bank PLC, it is valuable and important to identify the role of trade finance solutions in customer retention for several reasons. Firstly, customer loyalty has an impact on the profitability of the bank as often clients will remain loyal to the bank thus providing the bank with repeat business as well as word of mouth referrals. Secondly, including the factors affecting customer satisfaction, for instance LCs processing time or export monitoring, enables the bank to align its services to customers' requirements in a more efficient manner. Finally, the study's sampling of more recent advancements in trade finance is timely, as digital interfaces, automated solutions, and real-time identification of exposures reflect the manner in which banks are increasingly engaging their customers more rapidly, transparently, and flexibly and decision making. Through the evaluation of new trade finance technologies that have been adopted by Southeast Bank, this report will highlight on futurology for the bank to effectively determine

strategic ways of improving on its market competitiveness and customer loyalty in the modern world of innovation.

#### **3.1.4 Limitation**

Some of the limitations associated with the collection of data and the study included the following. Firstly, due to the relatively small sample size of 117 respondents, the research results might not be generalizable to all the customers of trade finance offered by Southeast Bank especially the large corporations or high-end customers with specific needs. Further, because the study used an online survey method, it may have failed to capture participants who are not more comfortable technology and those who prefer using traditional means of communication. Additionally, the majority of the study's data came from individual responses, which are more susceptible to biases such as social attractiveness or wrong understanding of survey questions.

### **3.2 Methodology**

The method uses a multidimensional way to assess trade financing options and how they affect customer satisfaction and loyalty. The following covers quantitative surveys that assess customer satisfaction and loyalty and evaluations of how technical elements affect decision-making, qualitative conversations with trade finance management to comprehend product features. Extensive insights into customer preferences and service efficacy will be obtained through statistical analysis and focused surveys.

#### **1. Trade Finance Solutions Analysis**

Qualitative: Face-to-face discussions with the trade finance managers will provide a comprehensive insight of the current products and technologies available in the market.

Data Sources: Information collected from internal records and interviews with stakeholders will help to analyze the services provided.

## **2. Customer Loyalty Measurement**

Quantitative: Consumers who use the bank's trade finance services who will have receive a survey that has been designed and circulated which has, including frequency of use, contentment, and propensity to refer Southeast Bank's trade financing services, this is how survey will evaluate the degree of loyalty.

Key Tools: Likert-scale questionnaires and statistical analysis to evaluate customer retention and loyalty trends.

## **3. Key Drivers of Customer Satisfaction**

Quantitative: The survey will ask questions targeted at pinpointing particular elements—like service speed, transparency, affordability, and ease of use that influence customer satisfaction as well as statistical techniques which will be applied to these answers in order to identify the elements that have the greatest impact on satisfaction levels.

Key Tools: The variables with the biggest effect on total customer satisfaction will be identified by statistically analyzing the reactions to these elements through the use of techniques like factor analysis.

## **4. Trade Finance Solution Features in technology on Customer Decision-Making.**

Quantitative: Conduct a systematic survey aimed at clients who regularly use of the bank's trade finance offerings. There will be questions in the survey that seek to determine how important different technological factors are help when they making decisions.

Key Tools: To assess viewpoints and choices, use multiple-choice questions and Likert scales.

This methodology will give Southeast Bank a thorough understanding of how trade finance solution characteristics affect customer decision-making by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. This will enable Southeast Bank to improve its products and services and better meet the demands of its clients.

### **3.2.1 Research Design**

The study used a mixed-methods, including qualitative and quantitative.

**Qualitative Component:** In-person interviews with trade finance professionals are expected to provide comprehensive information about the characteristics and services offered by Southeast Bank's trade finance systems. This will assist in determining the crucial elements that affect customer satisfaction as well as loyalty.

**Quantitative Component:** Clients those who have used trade finance services are going to be given access to an online survey that will be used to measure satisfaction, loyalty, and the influence of technology on decision-making in a quantitative manner. Moreover, multiple-choice questions along with Likert-scale are going to use for collecting data, that is subsequently analyzed using statistical techniques for further study.

### **3.2.2 Data & Information Sources**

Primary Data: Collecting by using a Google Forms-based online survey with a rating scale of questions. In an attempt to learn more about the elements that influence decision-making processes, customer loyalty, and satisfaction. The questionnaire is directed in Southeast Bank PLC clients who regularly use of trade finance services at Banani Branch.

Secondary Data: This is mainly collected using Google Scholar as well as the Athena platform at BRAC University. In addition, research papers, websites, publications, and journals these resources offer theoretical and contextual frameworks for studying further.

### **3.2.3 Population and sample**

**Population:** Every single customer of Southeast Bank PLC that utilize its trade financing services are included in this study's population such clients, which include large corporations including small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) engaged in international commerce, rely on Southeast Bank's trade finance solutions, which include export-import financing, guarantees, and letters of credit.

**Sample:** The 117 participants were chosen from the bank's customers in order to build up the sample. The study online Google Form was used to particularly focus on customers who use Southeast Bank's trade finance services in order to gather information from these participants. The data presented here gives insights on client loyalty, happiness, and decision-making characteristics linked to the bank's services on trade finance.

### **3.3 Findings and Analysis**

This gives significant information about how Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance options affect client level of satisfaction, loyalty, and decision-making. The important aspects of the services, the influence of technology, and the main factors influencing customer satisfaction are highlighted in the analysis.



### 3.3.1 Customer Profile

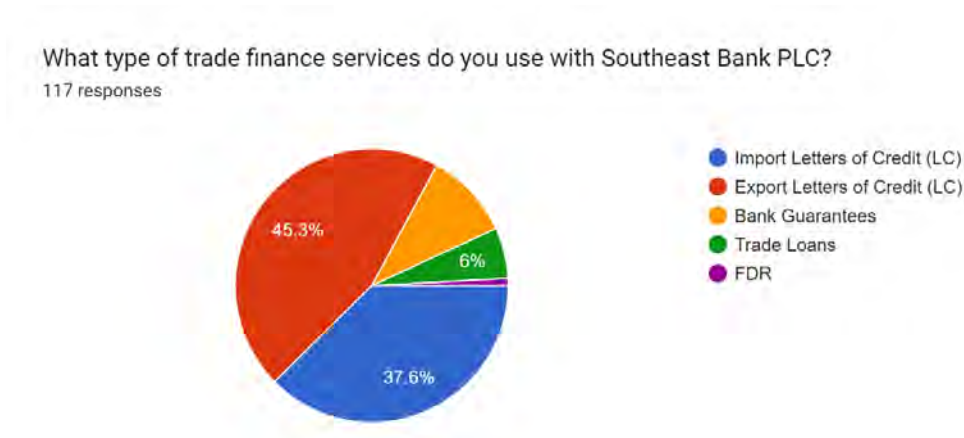


Figure 8: Trade Finance Services Uses

The breakdown of trade financing services worked with by Southeast Bank PLC's 117 respondents is represented in the pie chart. Perhaps the most often used service is Import Letters of Credit (LC), which is used by 45.3% of respondents. On the other hand, Letters of Credit (LC) for exports come in second, taking up 37.6% of use. While Trade Loans and FDR constitute small portions of the chart, the smallest amount, 6% depends on Bank Guarantees. According to the data, letters of credit are the most popular trade finance option chosen by bank clients for both import and export while export is higher because of the ready garments industry, despite fewer customers looking for other services.

### 3.3.2 Customer Loyalty

To what extent are you likely to engage the trade finance services offered by Southeast Bank PLC within the following one year?

117 responses

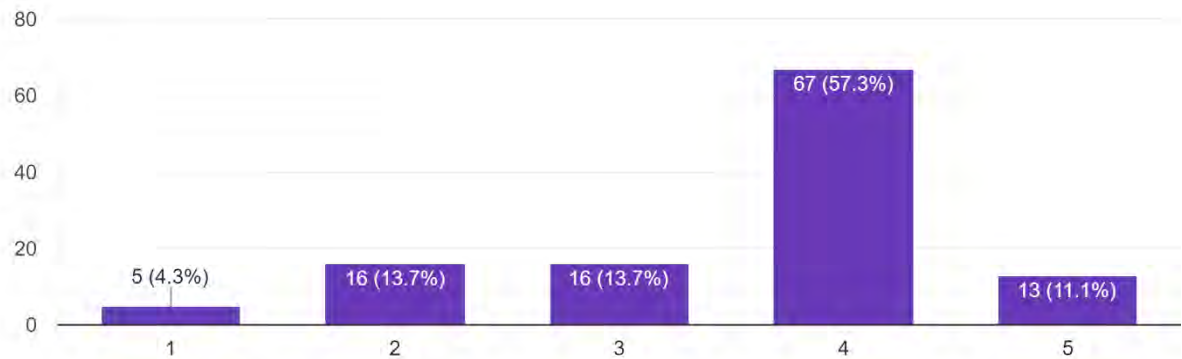


Figure 9: Percentage of Customer Loyalty

Responses from customers about how likely they are to use trade financing services from Southeast Bank PLC are displayed in a bar chart. Using a 5-point scale, more than half of the 117 respondents 57.3% evaluated their probability of involvement as 4, which indicates an adequate probability of continuous involvement. In addition, 11.1% ranked it as 5, indicating a high probability of use. whereas approximately 13.7% of respondents each assessed their probability of using as 2 or 3. On the other hand, only 4.3% of respondents gave their rating of likelihood a 1, which denotes a low chance of future engagement. On the whole, the data points to a crucial preference for continuing with the bank's trade finance offerings.

To what extent would you suggest Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance services to other companies?

116 responses

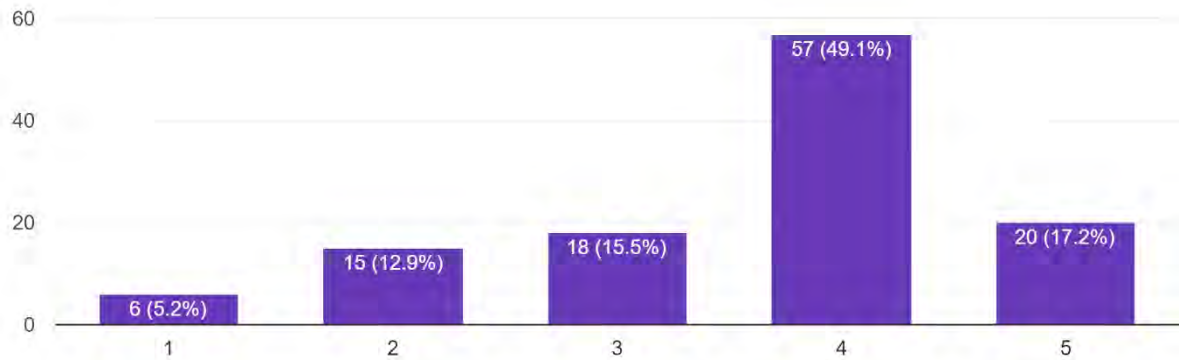


Figure 10: Finance Services Suggesting at SEBL

According to the pie chat and received responses, a scale rating system of 1 to 5, the majority of participants 57 individuals representing which is nearly 49.1% rated the service as a 4. So, this suggests a generally positive opinion. Additionally, an incredible 20 respondents of 17.2% ranked it as a 5. However, smaller numbers which is 15.5% chose 3 on the other hand, 15 respondents which is 12.9% chose a 2. Furthermore, just 6 respondents 5.2% indicated a 1. In general, the findings point to a high preference for recommending the trade finance services offered by the bank.

### 3.3.3 Customer Satisfaction

To how much are you pleased with the trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank PLC in terms of cost of services?

117 responses

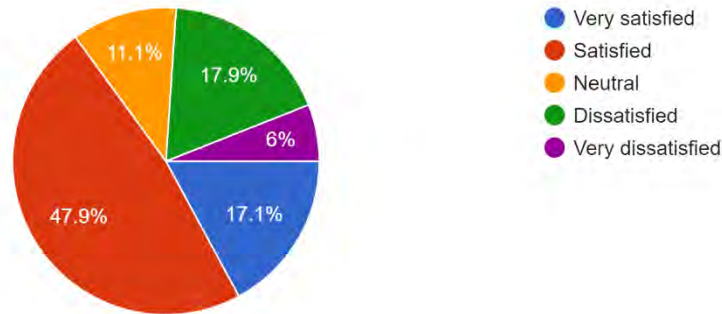


Figure 11: Customer Satisfaction

Based on 117 responds, the pie chart illustrates how satisfied customers are with Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions' service of costs. To begin with, 47.9% of respondents rate them as satisfied, which indicating a generally favorable opinion. In addition, 17.9% of respondents are Dissatisfied, whereas 17.1% are Very satisfied. Furthermore, only 6% of respondents indicated they were Very dissatisfied, and a lesser minority, 11.1%, expressed neutrality. These outcomes imply that bigger number of clients are satisfied on the other hand a significant percentage of consumers are still not happy with the price as an individual.

To how far do you find the trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank PLC satisfactory in terms of customer assistance and responsiveness?

114 responses

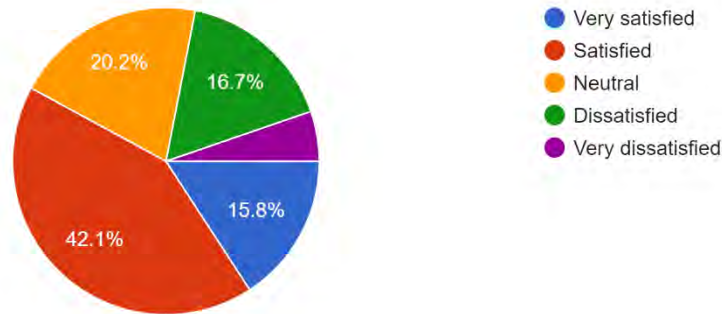


Figure 12: Satisfactory level of Assistance and Responsiveness

Based on 114 responds, the pie chart shows how satisfied customers are with Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions when it comes of responsiveness and customer service. Among them, 42.1% are Satisfied who have expressed satisfaction with the service, whereas 20.2% are neutral. On the other hand, 16.7% of respondents indicated they were dissatisfied, while 15.8% indicated they were very satisfied. Additionally, 5.3% of respondents, a lesser percentage, indicated they were Very dissatisfied. The results presented indicate that although 42.1% are Satisfied but a sizable portion of consumers are neutral or unsatisfied, there is still opportunity for improvement regarding the bank's response and support.

Out of the following aspects, which you think are key to your satisfaction of trade finance services offered by Southeast Bank PLC? (Select up to four if you want).

117 responses

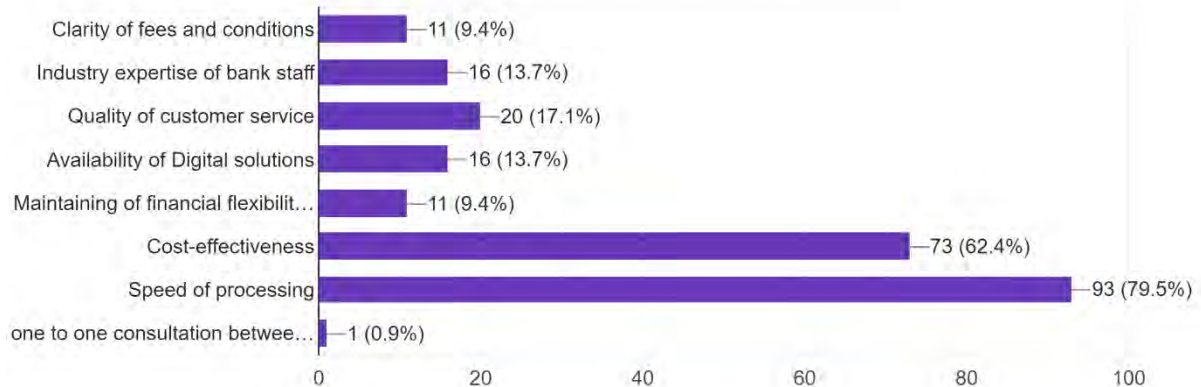


Figure 13: Key Satisfactory Percentage by Different Services

The graph displays consumer preferences for important features of Southeast Bank PLC's trade financing services. Its most significant factor, as chosen by 79.5% of those surveyed, is processing speed. Having 62.4% of votes, cost-effectiveness which is ranked second. The third position goes to exceptional customer service 17.1%, next to bank employees' sector knowledge 13.7% as well as the accessibility of digital solutions 13.7%. According to 9.4% of respondents, ensuring financial flexibility and making fees and conditions clear are also important. Only 0.9% of respondents ranked personal conversations between relationships managers and consumers as the least significant factor. In general, these findings imply that consumers place a high value on trade finance services' price and efficiency, despite less importance placed on digital capabilities and service quality.

How satisfied are you with speed of service (e.g., processing time for LCs) aspects of Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions?

117 responses

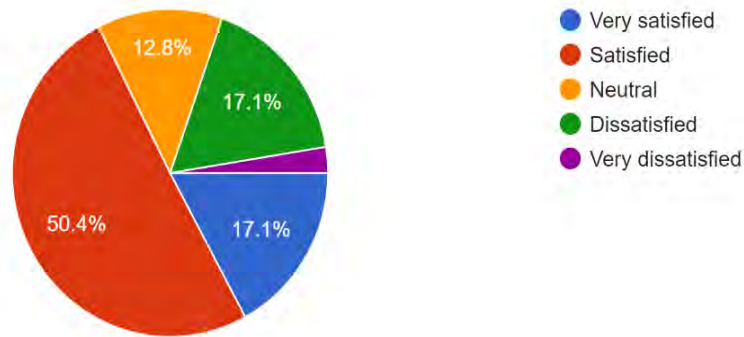


Figure 14: Speed of Service at SEBL

Customer satisfaction ratings with Southeast Bank PLC's trade financing solutions on speed of service are displayed in a pie chart. Among the 117 those who responded, the majority 50.4% are satisfied, whereas 17.1% are very satisfied. A significant number 12.8% are neutral. Additionally, it's very interesting to note that 17.1% of the participants are dissatisfied which is the same as the percentage of highly satisfied clients. According to the percentage that remains, a little portion 2.5% is very dissatisfied. Thus, the data indicates that even while the majority of clients are satisfied with the speed of service, there is still opportunity for development, which is demonstrated by the approximately 20% of respondents who are not satisfied.

### 3.3.4 Technological Features and Impact of Technological Improvements

How has Southeast Bank PLC's digital and automated trade finance solutions impacted your satisfaction?

117 responses

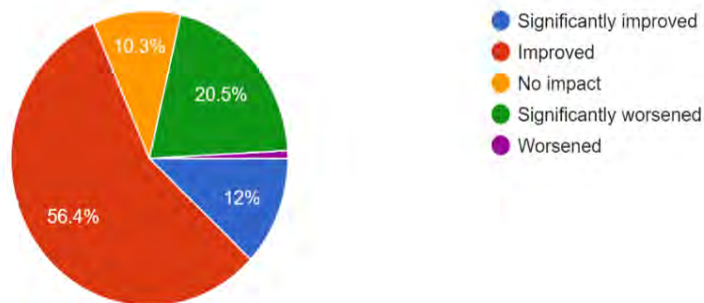


Figure 15: Digital and Automated Trade Finance Solutions

According to 117 responds, this pie chart shows how Southeast Bank PLC's automated and digital trade finance solutions influence customer satisfaction. Customers are generally satisfied 56.4%, with 12% indicating a significant improvement. On the other hand, 10.3% of participants, indicated that these technology advancements had no effect on them. Unexpectedly, an important number which is 20.5% stated that their level of improvement had dropped, which is an alarming observation. While the majority of clients have generally benefited from the bank's digital and automated solutions, a significant number have suffered problems, indicating the need for additional research and possibly better ways to apply these innovations and technology.



How much are you satisfied with their technological features support?

117 responses

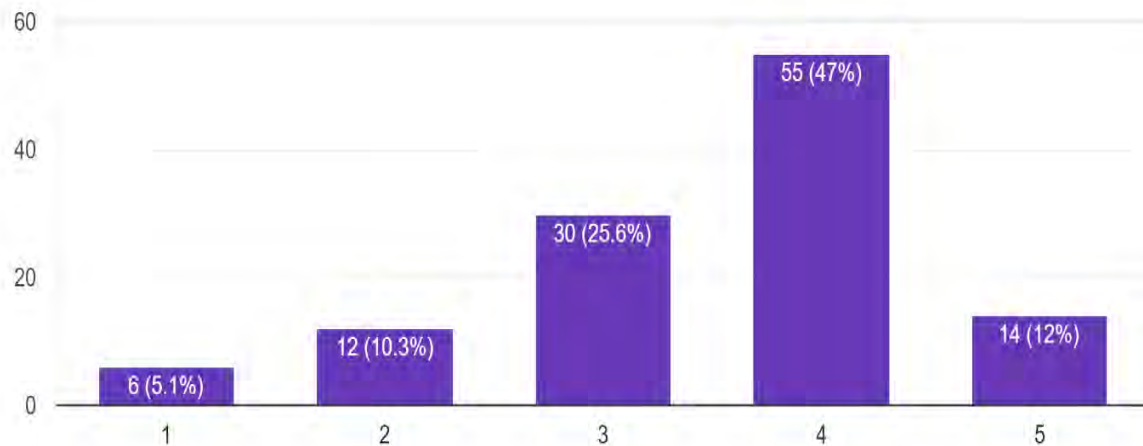


Figure 16: Percentage of Satisfactory support of Technological Features

According to 117 responds, the following bar chart shows how satisfied customers are with the support provided by technological features. On a rating system of 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest satisfaction level. A significant proportion of participants which is 47% provided a score of 4, signifying a greater degree of satisfaction. The second-largest group is 25.6% rated the situation as neutral. Simply 12% of participants gave the maximum score of 5. On the other hand, 10.3% scored it at 2, and 5.1% specified the lowest score of 1. In summary, 59% of customers gave the technological feature support a rating of four or five which indicating that they are generally satisfied with this support the bank has. Nonetheless, there's potential for development because a significant percentage is either neutral or unhappy.

How likely are you to recommend this bank's trade finance solutions to other businesses? (i.e., from 1 to 5).

117 responses

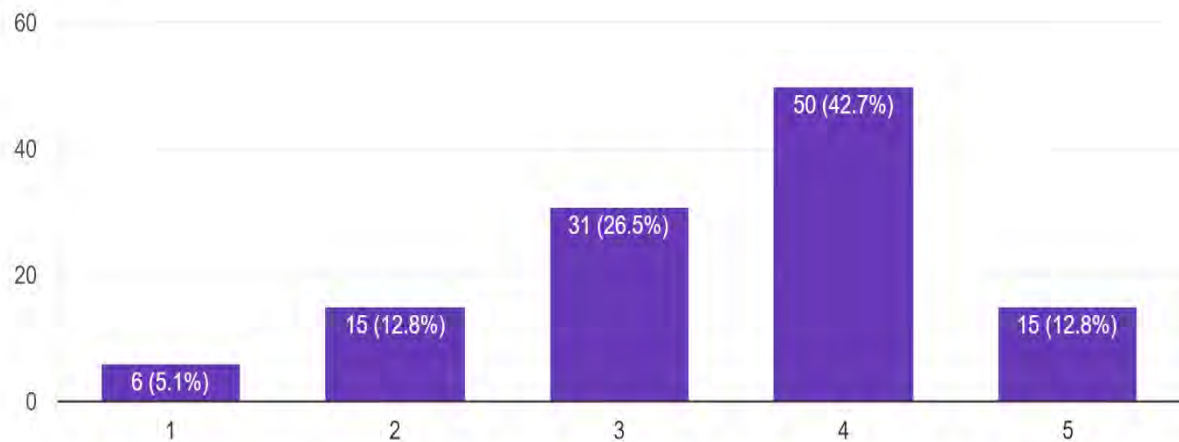


Figure 17: Percentage of recommendation to Take Future Services

A total of 117 responds, the following chart shows the probability that clients will suggest the bank's trade finance options to other businesses or companies. According to 1 (Not at all recommended) to 5 (Highly recommended), the scale goes. A large percentage of the participants 42.7% gave an overall score of 4, signifying an increased probability of recommendation, which is consistent with the data's favorable trend. The next largest group 26.5% assigned a neutral score of three. On the other hand, 12.8% of the participants considered their probability as 2 or 5 and just 5.1% specified a rating of 1. So, considering 55.5% of respondents ranking their willingness to refer at a score of 4 or 5, the overall results are favorable.

### **3.4 Summary and Conclusion**

This report examines the impact of Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions on customer loyalty, which focusing on customer degree of satisfaction as well as decision-making influenced by technological advancements. A questionnaire survey of 117 clients using trade financing services was conducted for the study, resulting in disclosed important information on their preferences, degree of satisfaction, as well as client's loyalty.

The findings demonstrate that most respondents are generally satisfied by the trade finance items and offerings offered by the bank, especially the most popular services, import and export letters of credit (LC). A significant customer loyalty was demonstrated by the fact that over 55% of participants expressed an increased probability of continuing using these services. There are is, still, room for development, particularly when it comes to resolving issues with cost along with the effectiveness of technological elements. The customers' experience from the usage of technological tools, such as automated trade finance solutions, has been positive in majority of cases; however, negative shift in satisfaction level was above 20% mostly indicating issues related to implementation of such solutions. This implies that although digitalization enhanced speed and transparency more effort is needed to manage these systems for efficient service delivery to customers.

In a nutshell, the study underlines the need for constant innovation, effective service delivery, and clear communication in customer retention. Southeast Bank can strengthen its competitiveness and provide better service to its foreign trade financing clients by dealing with the operational and technological difficulties that have already been identified.

### 3.5 Recommendations

1. **Enhance Technological Integration:** In terms of the digitalization of trade finance solutions, Southeast Bank has started this process but maybe needs to take steps to further enhance and fine-tune services. The main expected benefits of the recommendation will be the better organization of the implementation of the automated processes that will lead to the enhancement of the overall satisfaction of the customers and the efficiency of the business. This could mean enhancing the stability of digital platforms and presenting user-friendly interfaces to the users.
2. **Focus on Customized Solutions:** Business people like personalized services and as such the extension of trade finance solutions that are unique to their needs or requirements as business people will further deepen customer loyalty. Southeast Bank's offerings should also consider covering both SMEs and large-scale corporations as consumers to stand out from rivals.
3. **Improve Customer Support:** For the improvement of customer service, it will more or less likely prove advantageous for the bank to employ a structure. Employees should also undergo training in trade finance solutions on the regular basis to solve customer queries and insistence on communication should mean that customer queries and concerns are handled more proactively.
4. **Continuous Feedback Mechanism:** They try to improve on a system of getting and responding to the feedback of the customers so as to enable the bank to come up with services that meet the needs of the clients. It is recommended to perform frequent checks

and callbacks to identify the issues that may need improvement and to improve the customer relations.

5. Increase Digital along with Mobile Accessibility: Trade financing customers may benefit from more ease of access by having better online and mobile banking solutions. To begin with that, offering more extensive mobile-based solutions will draw in more customers, especially from proficient in technology companies looking for effective online channels.

In the highly competitive trade finance industry, Southeast Bank may sustain greater levels of client satisfaction, develop long-term loyalty, along with expand on its advantages by concentrating on five important areas.

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## Appendix

# The influence of trade finance solutions on customer loyalty

This survey is designed to assess customer loyalty, satisfaction, and decision-making related to trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank PLC. The survey will include a mix of multiple-choice, Likert scale.

### Section 1: Customer Profile

1. What type of trade finance services do you use with Southeast Bank PLC?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Import Letters of Credit (LC)
- Export Letters of Credit (LC)
- Bank Guarantees
- Trade Loans
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. For how many years have you been engaging Southeast Bank PLC in trade finance services?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Zero to 3 months
- 3 months to 1 years
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- More than 5 years

### Section 2: Customer Loyalty



3. To what extent are you likely to engage the trade finance services offered by Southeast Bank PLC within the following one year?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

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Very      Very likely

4. To what extent would you suggest Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance services to other companies?

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

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Very      Very likely

### Section 3: Customer Satisfaction

How satisfied are you with the following aspects of Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions?

5. How satisfied are you with speed of service (e.g., processing time for LCs) aspects of Southeast Bank PLC's trade finance solutions?

Mark only one oval.

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

6. To how much are you pleased with the trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank PLC in terms of cost of services?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Very satisfied  
 Satisfied  
 Neutral  
 Dissatisfied  
 Very dissatisfied

7. To how far do you find the trade finance solutions offered by Southeast Bank PLC satisfactory in terms of customer assistance and responsiveness?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Very satisfied  
 Satisfied  
 Neutral  
 Dissatisfied  
 Very dissatisfied

8. Which type of satisfaction do you have with the digital platforms and resources (such as the mobile app and web portal) offered by Southeast Bank PLC for trade financing solutions?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Very satisfied  
 Satisfied  
 Neutral  
 Dissatisfied  
 Very dissatisfied

9. Out of the following aspects, which you think are key to your satisfaction of trade finance services offered by Southeast Bank PLC? (Select up to four if you want).

*Check all that apply.*

- Clarity of fees and conditions
- Industry expertise of bank staff
- Quality of customer service
- Availability of Digital solutions
- Maintaining of financial flexibility in terms and conditions
- Cost-effectiveness
- Speed of processing
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 4: Impact of Technological Improvements

10. How has Southeast Bank PLC's digital and automated trade finance solutions impacted your satisfaction?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Significantly improved
- Improved
- No impact
- Significantly worsened
- Worsened

11. What specific components of the digital modes do you consider as most helpful in dealing with your trade finance operations? (Select all that apply)

*Check all that apply.*

- Mobile facility in trade finance services
- Integration with accounting systems
- Automated alerts and notifications
- Real-time tracking of transactions
- Online application in trade finance products

12. How much are you satisfied with their technological features support?

*Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not      Extremely satisfied

**Section 5: Influence on Decision-Making**

13. Identify which of the following have the greatest impact in your decision to choose the Southeast Bank PLC for trade finance services? List the following from Most Important to Least Important (i.e., from 1 to 5).

*Check all that apply.*

- Speed of service
- Digital capabilities
- Flexibility of terms
- Cost of services
- Customer service quality
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. In the past one year have you thought of transferring your trade finance business to another bank? If yes, Which factors made you consider the option?

*Mark only one oval.*

- No
- Maybe
- Yes
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

15. How likely are you to recommend this bank's trade finance solutions to other businesses? (i.e., from 1 to 5).

*Mark only one oval.*

1 2 3 4 5

Not      Highly recommended