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adopts data analysis process which is based on collecting quantitative data through distribution of structured questionnaire to a number of SME owners in the construction industry using Google forms to create the survey and distribute it via emails and WhatsApp messages. The collected data will be tabulated using MS-Excel as a tool for the calculating the various statistical methods.

5. Result Analysis

The survey questionnaire which was distributed to the respondents was structured in a way to gather information related to the research problem statement and research questions. Therefore, the questions were categorized in six groups related the challenges faced by SME's in the construction industry of Oman that were discussed in the literature review. The finding are discussed as follows:

- The payment delay as a challenge faced by SME's in the construction industry was discussed in question 6, it has been observed that 25 % of the respondents confirmed that their payment for the completed works received within 61 to 90 days, and 34% of participants they receive payment after 90 days, which represent a long lead time for amount receivables that impacts the firm's cash flow.
- Contracts are consider the written agreement between parties involved in the certain work, and due to high competition in the construction industry, the SME's face a challenge to accept terms and conditions set in the contract agreement by the clients to secure jobs. In question 10, the participants opinions on the contract's agreement with clients in construction industry, if it is fairly structured to saves all parties rights, 37.5 % disagree with the statement and 31.3 % were neutral.
- Access to finance is the main challenge faced by SME's in construction sector in Oman, the participants were asked their opinion regarding the collaterals and guarantees required by the bank, the administration process to obtain financial support, and the interest rate applied on commercial loans. The respondents demonstrated high concern

and un-satisfaction of the services provided by the financial institutions and banks in Oman to support the SME's in construction industry.

- The finding from the survey questionnaire shows that the SME's owners face real challenges with the regulations and policies that are associated with their business. Where 62,5 % of the participants demonstrate their concern about the support programmes from the government authorities provided to SME in construction industry, and 81.3 % of the respondents rejected the statement that states the legal commercial claims process are simple and fast.
- Another challenge that have impacted the SME's business in the construction industry, which is the non-availability of skilled manpower in the local market, this was confirmed by 75% of the respondents. In addition, 62.6 % demonstrated high concern on the complications of the regulations and policies set by government authorities supports SME's in obtaining expatriate manpower clearance.
- It is observed from the responses of question 16, regarding the importance of management knowledge and skills in the top management level for the success of the business and growth, that the majority of participants with 78.1 % confirmed the importance of management knowledge.

Statistical Analysis

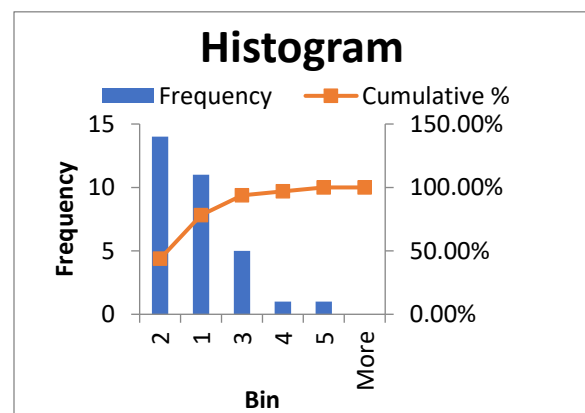


Figure 5. 1, Histogram Distribution

Bin	Frequency	Cumulative %	Bin	Frequency	Cumulative %
1	11	34.38%	2	14	43.75%
2	14	78.13%	1	11	78.13%
3	5	93.75%	3	5	93.75%
4	1	96.88%	4	1	96.88%
5	1	100.00%	5	1	100.00%
More	0	100.00%	More	0	100.00%

Table 5. 1, Histogram Analysis

The above histogram graph and table indicates the results of applying histogram analysis to question 15 which is set to obtain the opinion of the participants if the interest rate required by financial institutions/Banks, for commercial financial support is reasonable and affordable. It shows that nearly half (11 out of 32) respondents strongly disagree with the statement and (14 out of 32) disagree, which constitute a percentage of 42.4 % and 36.4 % respectively.

	Male	Female
Mean	2.034482759	2
Variance	1.391625616	1
Observations	29	3
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	3	
t Stat	0.055841486	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.479489526	
t Critical one-tail	2.353363435	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.958979052	
t Critical two-tail	3.182446305	

Table 5. 2, t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

The *t* Test was conducted on the different opinion of male and female on question 11 which states that, the required skilled manpower to execute the company's business is available locally and easy for recruitment. From the result we observe that the P value (two-tail) is 0.95 which is > 0.05 , therefore, it indicates that there is no significant differences of opinion observed for question 11 for both male and female, where both are whether strongly disagree or disagree with the statement.

	Q13	Q14
Q13	1	
Q14	0.795137073	1

Table 5. 3, Correlation Analysis (Q13 vs Q14) High positive Correlation

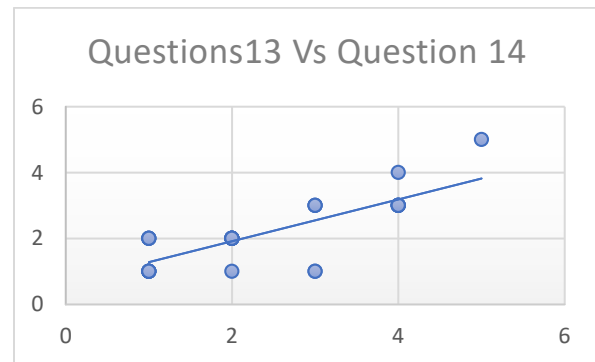


Figure 5. 2, Correlation Analysis Chart

Question 13 and 14 were tested using the correlation analysis and the result shown a strong positive linear correlation between the participant's answers regarding their opinion if the collaterals and guarantees required by the banks and financial institutions are affordable and reasonable and the administrative process for obtaining financial facilities from financial institutions are fast and easy. The majority of the participants whether strongly disagree or disagree with both statements giving a percentage of 60.6 % and 66.7 % respectively.

6. Conclusion and Future Research

This study has explored various opportunities for development and growth for SME's in the construction industry, ranging from small material supplying, logistics, maintenance work, innovative construction solutions, and many other construction related activities. The major challenges lies in main six factors, the delay on payment, access to finance, manpower availability locally, contractual issues, regulations and policies, and the SME's owner's management capability, which has to be undertaken seriously by the concerned authorities in Oman to develop this sector.

Further studies can be carried out to investigate specific opportunities and challenges faced by the SME's in the construction industry of Oman. Implementation of technology in the construction Industry of Oman, the use of Building Information Modeling, various opportunities on the small manufacturing industries for building materials in Oman to minimize imported materials and enhance economy, and investigate the impact of payment delay on the firm's cash flow and how it disturbs their operation activities can be considered as further studies to understand in depth the business environment of SME's in construction industry.

7. References

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