# Islamic Banking with a Closer Look at Bosnia and Herzegovina: Knowledge, Perceptions and Decisive Factors for Choosing Islamic Banking

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This study investigates the knowledge, perceptions and decisive factors for choosing Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In-depth and usual survey methods are used to identify the factors which influence the success of islamic banking applications based on the result from factor analysis. The sample is selected randomly among the users and non-users of the Islamic banking. The analysis' result indicates that general knowledge about Islamic banking is low. The perceptions of Islamic banking are not positive. Also, the results indicate that the religion is the most influential decisive factor for choosing the Islamic banking.

Keywords: Islamic banking, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Decisive factors.

## Introduction

The concept of Islamic banking system is old, while Islamic banking system has been introduced in the last quarter of the twentieth century. In order to provide the possibilities for Muslim customers to satisfy their needs and demands, financial institutions that operate in accordance to the islamic financial principles were needed. Therefore, Islamic financial system (IBS) was introduced. Since the conventional banking industry is entirely based on the interest based system and that is prohibited in the Islamic shari'ah rules, the Muslims needed such institute which provides them the Islamic platform for their financial transactions. The Islamic finance is defined as a financial service or product principally implemented to comply with the main principles of Islamic law - Shari'ah.

According to the official statistical data in 1992, the number of Muslim population in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 1.905.829 (43.67%). <sup>3</sup>Now in 2011 there is still not a new list of citizens that shows the percentage of Muslims living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But, it is assumed that the percentage is almost similar as it was in 1992. This fact may be considered as one of the main reasons for opening an Islamic bank in this region.

In the early 1990 there were first initiatives for forming a domestic bank that would operate on islamic financial principles. It was supposed to be the first Islamic bank in the former Yugoslavia, with the center in Sarajevo. But, because of the war, the realization of the initiative was stoped.

In 1992. Vakufska bank d.d. Sarajevo was formed. This bank was supposed to act according to islamic financial principles, in amount that current law in Republic of BiH would allow it at that time. This try was also not successful, since the bank mostly operated on interest principles and not on the Sharia principles. The first bank in Bosnia and Herzegovina that was established and tried to operate in the practice according to principles of islamic banking was

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Orient bank d.d. Sarajevo. The bank was formed in 1996. Orient bank was providing noninterest loans, and was animating foreign investors in order to strengthen its own capital. But, the bank was unable to satisfy the cenzus of the minimum required capital, that was rised. That was the reason for closing the bank.

In october 2000. Bosnia Bank International (BBI) was established in Sarajevo. Untill now, it is the only bank in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is to operate in accordance to islamic financial principles. The founders of the bank are Islamic Development Bank 45,46%, Dubai Islamic Bank 27,27% and Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank 27,27%. The domestic *Law about banks* brought in accordance to conventional banks does not respect the attributes of islamic *interest-free* model of functioning. Neverthelles, the existing law frame is not an obstacle for forming islamic banks. Bosnia Bank International is mostly based on providing long-term loans for the citizens, in order to finance acquisitions, constructions and adaptations of living objects in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ramic (2011) explains that the main reason for opening Bosnia Bank International in Bosnia and Herzegovina is helping this country and its citizens to overcome the economical consequences of the war. BBI has the greatest money base needed for establishment of a bank in BiH. The desire of Bosnia Bank International is to become a partner in development of Balkan countries and in connecting businesses of OIC member countries and Balkan countries.

This study seeks to add to the rare literature related to Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It examines the knowledge, perceptions and selection criteria of BiH citizens related to the Islamic banking.

## Literature review

The literature explaining on customers' perception towards Islamic Banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina is rare. Also, the literature explaining and describing Islamic banking and finance is not adequate. And same is the case with the conventional banking system, where the customers perception is not considered very much by researchers.

Islamic banking is a form of modern banking based on Islamic legal concepts developed in the first centuries of Islam, using risk-sharing as its main method, and excluding financing based on a fixed, pre-determined return (Schaik, 2001).<sup>4</sup> An Islamic banking and financial system exists to provide a variety of religiously acceptable financial services for Muslim people. In addition to this special function, the banking and financial institutions, like all other aspects of Islamic society, are expected to contribute richly to the achievement of the major socio-economic goals of Islam. The most important of these are economic well-being with full employment and a high rate of economic growth, socioeconomic justice and an equitable distribution of income and wealth, stability in the value of money, and the mobilization and investment of savings for economic development . (Hassan and Lewis, 2007, p. 20).

The principles on which the operations of Islamic financial institutions are governed on are also known as Shariah principles. Sharia refers to the corpus of Islamic law based on Divine guidance as given by the Qur'an and the Sunnah and embodies all aspects of the Islamic faith, including beliefs and practices (Iqbal, Molyneux, 2005, p. 16). Equity or justice represents the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping, 2010, p. 2.

basic principle of islamic economic access, as well as of the islamic banking. Among the other original principles of islamic economy in the context of contemplation of islamic banking the following can be highlighted: a) The total ban of paying or remuneration of interest in any kind of form; b) Profit loss sharing obligation c) No profit without taking risk; d) Ban of making money out of money; e) Ban of gambling (*maysir*), indifiniteness, to high risk, speculation and dubiousness (*gharar*); f) Ban of financing or dealing with, in islam, forbidden (*haram*) products or activities (Hadzic, 2005, p. 159-160).

Riba is an Arabic word. It stands for excess, increase, addition, expansion or growth. According to Sharia, *Riba* is related to the "premium" that debtor has to pay to the person it took loan from, in addition to the capital as a condition for having a loan or elongation of the debt period. (Iqbal, Mirakhor, 2007, p. 52). Iqbal and Mirakhor (2007) explain that existing of *Riba* (interest) in an economy is a form of social and economical harnessing, which ruins basic islamic study of social justice. So, by eliminating interest from economic system, economically and socially equal, and ethically and morally right economical behaviour, is being furthered. It is also stated that existing of *Riba*, is not in accordance with islamic system of values, which prohibit any form of "injustifiable" earnings. Furthermore, by eliminating Riba each of the sides in contract earns fair and righteous award. This in the end leads to more justifiable distribution of earnings and more righteous economical system.

The next principle that must be abided by Islamic banks is the prohibition of Gharar. Gharar is generally translated as risk, hazard or uncertainty. It implied Gharar as deception based on the absence of knowledge or the unlikelihood of delivery with the prospect of causing harm (Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping, 2010, p. 1). Metwally (2006) also argues that Gharar are speculative transactions which are harmful to society.<sup>5</sup> Gharar is to be avoided in any transaction. It refers to uncertainty or a lack of knowledge that could result in outcome harmful to one side in the contract. This lack of knowledge, as well as a lack of control of the outcome of any transaction, may come from misrepresentation, fraud, duress mistake, or terms beyond the control and knowledge of one of the parties to the contract. Derivatives, such as options and futures, and gambling is believed to be violating the Gharar principle.

Prohibition of games of chance is explicit in the Holy Qur'an (S5: 90–91). It uses the word *maysir* for games of hazard, derived from *usr* (ease and convenience), implying that the gambler strives to a mass wealth without effort, and the term is now applied generally to all gambling activities. Gambling in all its forms is forbidden in Islamic jurisprudence. Business activities which contain any element of gambling are also forbidden by Islamic law. The *shari'a* determined that, in the interests of fair, ethical dealing in commutative contracts, unjustified enrichment through games of pure chance should be prohibited (Hassan & Lewis, 2007, p. 57).

Another principle is profit and loss sharing (PLS). Form of partnership where partners share profits and losses on the basis of their effort and capital share is known as profit-and-loss-sharing (PLS) financing. Share of risk and insecurity of a business is a highly important characteristic of islamic financial contracts (Igbal and Mirakhor, 2007, p. 59). Islamic banking is a system that mobilizes savings on the basis of profit and loss sharing that is considered to be fairer and more conducive to investment and development (Hassan & Lewis, 2007. p. 283).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

According to Khan (1986) the primary advance of PLS is that it leads to a more efficient allocation of capital because the return on capital and its allocation depend on the productivity and viability of the project and therefore promote greater market discipline in Islamic banks.<sup>6</sup> The activities mentioned and all the other activities that Islamic banks are undertaking should be in line with Islamic financial principles. There should be a special Shariah board to supervise and advise the bank on the rightness of transactions.

Yusof (1999) found profit motivation and social desirability as key factors impacting consumer adoption of Islamic banking in Singapore where non-Muslims form 85% of the population and Muslims 15%.<sup>7</sup> A study that was conducted by to this Haron and Planisek (1994) in Malysia, and there findings suggests that the profit and the religions are considered to be the two major factors while selecting any banking system. There observation suggests that about 40% of Muslims customers prefers Islamic banking system (Khattak, 2011)<sup>8</sup>.

Gerrard and Cunningham's (1997) study in Singapore found 41.4% of Muslim respondents would deposit an unexpectedly acquired substantial sum of money in Islamic banks, but half of them would withdraw and transfer all deposits to another bank if no profit is announced, much like non-Muslims who deposit with banks that guarantee a return.<sup>9</sup> Gerrad and Cunningham (1997) also found that profit or interest rate served as a reason for people maintaining their relationship with Islamic banks.<sup>10</sup>

Metawa and Almoassawi (1997) conducted a research study in the financial market of the Bahrain. Researchers come with the conclusion that the religious believes play in important role in the selection of Islamic banking system, and the rate of returns too has role in the bank selection criteria. A study that was conducted by Erol and El-Bdour (1989) found that the Islamic banks customers attracted towards the Islamic banking system not just because of the religious factors, but they are attracted towards the Islamic banking system because of the return they received from it.<sup>11</sup>

Khazeh and Decker (1992) identified interest rates as one of the top five determinants factors that influenced the banking decision among 1198 of business school alumni of Salisbury state university in Maryland.<sup>12</sup> Haron and Nor Affifah (2000) analyzed relationship between deposits and rate of returns offered in Islamic and conventional banking schemes in Malaysia. The researcher targeted the data for analysis from 1984 to 1999 on monthly basis. There finding suggests that the there is negative relationship existence between interest rates and interest free deposits. They found that the Islamic accounts holders are attracted by the profit motives.<sup>13</sup> Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping, (2010, p. 8) observed that factors such as costbenefit, service delivery, convenience and influence by friends are the main determinants of accepting Islamic banking.

Researchers Haron et al (1994) have targeted the customers of Malaysia in order to know how the Muslims customers of Malaysia select the banking system. And they found that there are three very important factors that are influencing the Muslims selection criteria regarding the

<sup>9</sup> Loo, 2010, p. 5

<sup>11</sup> Khattak, 2011, p. 4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Loo, 2010, p. 5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Khattak, 2010, p. 258

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping, 2010, p. 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping, 2010, p. 3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Khattak, 2011, p. 6

banking system, and these factors are, availability of efficient services by the banking system, secondly the transaction speed and finally the bank personal behavior. And there was another important factor which also plays role in the selection of banking system and that is the knowledge of the new offered produced to the customers by the bank. Very huge number of Muslim and non Muslim customers suggests that they will adopt the Islamic banking system if they get knowledge about the operation activities of the banking system (Khattak,2011 p.5).

Marimuthu, Jing, Gie, Mun, Ping (2010) also found that banks should take note of people's insufficient knowledge in Islamic banking system into consideration especially when promoting Islamic financial services. Hence, banks should revamp their marketing activities accordingly. A study that was explored by Erol and El Bdour in (1989) and Erol in (1990) are consider to be the pioneers in the patronage research studies in the field of Islamic banking system. By targeting the customers of Islamic banking system and the conventional banking system the researchers found that the. Customers who support Islamic banking system perceived that there are three most important criteria in the bank selection system and these are, efficient service provision, bank reputation and the bank image confidentiality.<sup>14</sup>

Gerrard and Cunningham's (1997) study stressed the significance of customer awareness, product knowledge and informative advertising campaigns. The need to create awareness, enhance product knowledge and improve promotional campaigns is supported by Haron et al. (1994), Bley and Kuehn (2004), Dusuki and Abdullah (2006) and Thambiah et al. (2007) to combat growing competition from both Islamic and conventional banking products.<sup>15</sup>A study by Haron et al. (1994) reveals that only 40% of Muslim customers consider religion as an important factor in patronizing banks. Similarly, there is general lack of awareness of Islamic banking system among Singaporean communities, be them Muslims or non-Muslims (Gerrard and Cunningham 1997). These results suggest that Islamic banks do not need to rely on religious factor as a strategy in attracting customers, but they should focus more on provision of quality and efficient services.<sup>16</sup>

Bley and Kuehn (2004) studied 667 business graduate and undergraduate students' knowledge and perception of conventional and Islamic finance in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Non-Muslim students viewed Islamic finance as inherently appealing to Muslims, and did not perceive Islamic finance as provider of superior products. In the study about customer satisfaction and awareness of Islamic banking system in Pakistan Khattak and Rehman (2010) find that Islamic banking industry have to give consideration to providing awareness to their customers, since the customers are not aware of the different Islamic banking products. This survey suggested that if the banks want to have best competition with their rivals then they must have to keep their management staff highly trained and professional, because they have to attract and satisfy their customer with direct interaction (Lorience, 2003).<sup>17</sup> Sudin et al. (1994) conducted a study on Malaysian customers. They determined the main factors that customers considered very important while selecting the financial institution. They found that there are three most essential criteria in the bank selection for Muslims, these are:

1. The provision of fast and efficient services.

2. The speed of the transaction.

3. The reputation and image of the bank.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Loo, 2010, p. 5

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Abdullah and Dusuki, 2006, p. 8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Khattak and Rehman, 2010, p. 2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 2

Metawa and Almossawi (1998) studied on the Bahrain customers. They investigated the customer's attitude by taking a sample of 300 customers. They got to the point that there were two main factors involved:

1. Adherence to the Islamic principle,

Kamal Naser, Ahmed Jamal and Khalid Al-Khatib in (1999) tried to get the degree of awareness of the customers towards the IBS products. They had taken a sample of 206 respondents and come to the conclusion that most of the customers have a little bit knowledge about the specific products such as Mudarabah and Murabaha. But most of them do not use these products (Naser et al., 1999).<sup>20</sup> Marko Loo (2010) in its research about Attitudes and Perceptions towards Islamic Banking among Muslims and Non-Muslims in Malaysia concludes that adherence to Islamic tenets remain the main motivator for Muslims to use Islamic banking.

#### Methodology

We obtained the data through face to face survey method from 200 islamic banking users and non users in Sarajevo. We designed questionnaire based on the objective of the paper and each question is followed five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Survey responds are analyzed by using Factor Analysis method in SPSS.

The origin of factor analysis is generally ascribed to Charles Spearman (Harman, 1976). The essential purpose of factor analysis has been well expressed by Kelley (1940, p.120): The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the results obtained from the questionnaire (Leng et al., 2008). In the study it is going to be used to analyze the results that come from the survey

Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. Factor analysis searches for such joint variations in response to unobserved latent variables. The observed variables are modeled as linear combinations of the potential factors, plus error terms. Factor analysis originated in psychometrics, and is used in the other applied sciences deal with large quantities of data.

## **Empirical Results**

In the first step, survey responses are analyzed at the item level using text. In the second step responses are scrutinized for patterns through factor analytic methods using the SPSS software program in all procedures reported in the study. Principal Axis Factor is used as default setting and determine the factor loadings greater than 0.40. After the verification of Kaiser-Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (must be over 0.60) and determining the number of factors we proceed to rotate the matrix of loadings to obtain orthogonal factors using varimax rotation (Kaiser, 1958). In the third step, we use Kaiser Strategy (1960) and drop all components with eigenvalues smaller than 1.0 and repeat procedures setting the loading size cut-off value as 0.40 to obtained rotated second matrix of loadings. In addition in order to gauge out perception differences in islamic bank users and non-users, survey responds are divided into three groups as overall, users and non-users. Factor analysis results

<sup>2.</sup> and return rate".<sup>19</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 2-3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 3

are presented in Table 1, 2 and 3. In the last step, factors are identified and compared the results obtained from two approaches.

Five items loaded in Factor 1 indicate that Bosnians (mostly university graduates) have knowledge about Islamic banking principles. This factor is labelled as "Positive perceptions about Islamic banking knowledge". The three items that load onto Factor 2 shows Bosnians' ethical view on banking applications and is labelled as "Positive perception on the idea of Islamic banking applications"

Table 1 Rotated component loadings for overall				
Component	1	2	3	4
Differences between Islamic and Conventional banks	.786	-	-	-
Islamic bank products are based on interest	.860			
Islamic banks take interest in a certain amount?	.864			
Islamic banking is just using different names in highlighting banking products	.701			
Islamic bank funds can be directed in each type of business	.405			
Making money through legitimate investment and trade, is more acceptable than earning money through interest?		.832		
Money you are saving in a bank should not be loaned by the bank into businesses related with: alcohol, lottery, pornography.		.693		
Banks should share profit and loss with its clients, and not make earnings through interest from the money they loan to its clients?		.793		
Gender			.436	
Education level			.821	
Income			.660	
Age				.916
Eigenvalues	3.232	1.637	1.441	1.085
Percentage of total variance	2.905	1.862	1.378	1.249
Number of test measures	6	5	3	
Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy:	0.687			

Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy; 0.687

Extraction method; Principal Component Analysis

Rotation method; varimax with Kaiser Normalization

In the second step users' knowledge & perception about islamic banking are explored, as well as decisive factors for choosing Islamic bank and the level of satisfaction with the Islamic bank. Also the ethical views, about some banking applications, of the users are explored. Items loaded in Factor 1, which is labelled as "Positive perception about Islamic banking

applications", relate to satisfaction about Islamic banking applications. Users are neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied in general. But there is slightly more positive opinion in some aspects. Five items are loaded onto Factor 2 which is labelled as "Positive perceptions about Islamic banking knowledge". The users, in general, show a positive degree of knowledge about islamic banking. Seven items are loaded onto Factor 3, which is labelled as "Positive perception about the decisive conditions in chosing Islamic banking". The results indicate that service quality and cost, as well as confidence with the Islamic bank and religious aspect are also important for users in choosing Islamic bank. The items in Factor 4 are labelled as "Positive perception about main logics of Islamic banking". The results indicate that Bosnians', who are users of Islamic bank, ethical view on banking applications corresponds to the principles of Islamic banking.

Component	1	2	3	4	5
What is your level of satisfaction with the staff	.791				
proficiency of the Islamic bank	.791				
What is your level of satisfaction with the range					
of products and services provided by Islamic	.764				
bank					
What is your level of satisfaction with the	.814				
products and services profitability	.014				
What is your level of satisfaction with the cost	.713				
of services in Islamic bank	.715				
What is your level of satisfaction with the	.798				
availableness of Islamic Banking Products?	.170				
What is your level of satisfaction with the	.878				
Islamic bank in fulfilling your expectations?	.070				
What is your level of education		.482			
There are no differences between Islamic and		.740			
Conventional banks		.740			
Islamic bank products are based on interest		.853			
Islamic banks take interest in a certain amount?		.767			
Islamic banking is just using different names in		(00			
highlighting banking products?		.690			
Profit (in percentage) that client earns on			.628		
money borrowed to Islamic bank			.028		
Profit margin (in percentage) that Islamic bank			.635		
charges on the funds it loans to clients					
Low service cost			.751		
Service quality			.708		
Friend's and Relative's influence			.441		
Confidence with Islamic bank			.559		
Marketing of Islamic bank			.569		
Making money through legitimate investment				.831	
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Table 2 Rotated component loadings for users

and trade, is more acceptable than earning money through interest					
Money you are saving in a bank should not be				.712	
loaned by the bank into businesses related with:					
alcohol, lottery, pornography					
Banks should share profit and loss with its				.721	
clients, and not make earnings through interest					
from the money they loan to its clients?					
Islamic bank funds can be directed in each type					566
of business					
Income					.754
Gender					.671
Eigenvalues	5.409	4.008	2.095	1.875	1.620
Percentage of total variance	4.446	3.124	3.100	2.196	2.142
Number of test measures					
KMO Measure of sampling adequacy:	0.639				

KMO Measure of sampling adequacy;

0.639

Extraction method; Principal Component Analysis Rotation method; varimax with Kaiser Normalization

In the third step the behaviour & perceptions of non-users of Islamic banking and the reason for not choosing Islamic banking is explored. Items loaded in Factor 1, which is labelled as "negative perception on aplication casued by lack of knowledge and confidence on procedures of Islamic banking products" and it relates to decisive conditions for not using services of islamic bank. In general, for non users all the items loaded in Factor 1 are moderately important, while the results indicate that profit earned by the clients is the most important. Items loaded in Factor 2 is labelled as "Positive perceptions about Islamic banking knowledge". The results indicate that non-users have a relatively satisfying degree of knowledge about Islamic banking in general. Items loaded in Factor 3, which is labelled as "Positive perception about decisive conditions important for chosing the Islamic bank", relate to importance of decisive factors for choosing an islamic bank in the future. Results in Table 3 indicate that except religion and friends' and relatives influence, all other items loaded in Factor 3 are important or very important for non-users of the islamic banking applications. Non-users do not choose islamic banking because of profit, confidence, cost and insufficient branch network issues. Items loaded in Factor 4 is labelled as "Positive perception about main logics of Islamic banking". The results indicate that Bosnians', who are not users of Islamic banking, ethical view on banking applications corresponds to the principles of Islamic banking.

Table 3 Rotated component loadings for non-users				
Component	1	2	3	4
Disapproval of non-purpose credit	.782			
Profit (in percentage) that client earns on money borrowed to Islamic bank.	.779			
Lack of confidence	.761			
Complicated procedures	.756			
Profit margin (in percentage) that Islamic bank charges on the funds it loans to client	.738			
Lack of understanding and information	.525			
Islamic banks take interest in a certain amount?		.808		
Islamic bank products are based on interest		.775		
There are no differences between Islamic and Conventional banks		.764		
Islamic banking is just using different names in highlighting banking products		.570		
Religion		495		
Islamic bank funds can be directed in each type of business		.439		
Service quality			.800	
More Islamic bank branches			.790	
Low service charges			.692	
Profit margin (in percentage) that Islamic bank charges on the funds it loans to clients.			.612	
Insufficient branch network			.526	
Profit (in percentage) that client earns on money borrowed to Islamic bank			.489	
Money you are saving in a bank should not be loaned by the bank into businesses such are: alcohol, lottery, pornography.				710
Banks should share profit and loss with its clients, and not make earnings through interest from the money they loan to its clients?				624
Making money through legitimate investment and trade, is more acceptable than earning money through interest?				611
Perception that Islamic banking is only for Muslims				.522
Eigenvalues	5.501	2.751	2.165	1.718

Table 3 Rotated component loadings for non-users

Percentage of total variance	4.050	3.097	2.892	2.097
Number of test measures	6	6	6	4
Kaiser-Meyer Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy;	0.645			
Extraction method; Principal Component Analysis Rotation method; varimax with Kaiser Normalization				

#### Conclusion

In this study, we explore the knowledge, perceptions and decisive factors for choosing and not choosing Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A sample of 72 users of Islamic banking and 128 non-users of Islamic banking took part in this study. The sample is selected randomly among the users and non-users of Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Factor analyses result based on the face to face survey responds indicates that; a- either users or non-users are the favor of basic Islamic banking rules which are: i) ban of taking or paying interest in any form ii) profit and loss sharing iii) ban of making money through money iv) ban of financing or working with in islam forbidden (haram) products or activities b- despite of the fact that users are aware of the Islamic banking products, cost and benefit are still important factors in chosing Islamic banking, as well as service costs, service quality, and confidence with the Islamic bank, c- Islamic banks need to improve service and product quality and profitability to meet costumer' expectations, d- relatively higher cost and lower profit together with the insufficient branch network disatract or would disatract Bosnians to use islamic banking. It is important to mention one more fact. The majority of the respondents are muslims. The results show that, for the users of Islamic bank, religion is important, while the results for non-users show that religion is of little importance.

This study is significant since this is one of the pioneer studies of this type in Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina and at the same time it contributes to the further studies and researches in this area. The findings could help the relevant parties to further enhance the development of Islamic banking in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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