Causes of Poverty among Genders in Micro and Small Scale Enterprises in Jalingo, Nigeria

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Abstract

Ending poverty is a key issue of discussion in the world and the first goal of the seventeen sustainable development goals. Nigeria is richly endowed with natural resources, yet her people are severely improvised, trapped in vicious cycle of poverty. High levels of poverty among genders have been found to be detrimental to people's well-being and economic growth. Previous studies on microcredit were mostly in relation to economic growth with little attention on poverty and genders. This study fills this gap by investigating the relationship between micro-credit and Poverty among genders of micro and small-scale entrepreneurs. The simple unifying neoclassical scarcity-driven poverty theoretical framework and cross-sectional survey research design were adopted. Data analysis was based on the questionnaires retrieved from 186 and 726 small and micro entrepreneurs, a total of 912 obtained from the 229 and 794 samples determined by the Cochran's simple random sampling formula. The Probit and regression models were estimated using the Maximum Likelihood and Ordinary Least Square techniques respectively. Descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the demographic features of the respondents. The heteroskedasticity robust standard analysis was done and statistical significance at $p \leq 0.05$. The mean age of the respondents was 40 years and 63% were with formal education. The FGT poverty rate, depth and severity are 61.95%, 24.67% and 12.92% respectively, while the SST poverty rate is 32.68% and the Gini coefficient is 35.63%, indicating high poverty level of Poverty among the entrepreneurs. Probit results show that respondents who obtain micro-credit from deposit money banks (DMBs), microfinance banks, and relatives are less likely to be poor, with 16.9%, 11.8%, and 6.8% probabilities respectively. Also, respondents with monthly (43.88%), quarterly (48.56%), and yearly (37.08%) access to microcredit are less likely to be poor. Poverty is determined by income and year of schooling, with micro entrepreneurs having 39.4% and 3.6% probabilities of reducing poverty, while small-scale entrepreneurs have 26.8% and 0.9% probabilities. Land as collateral and a 6-month repayment period increase the volume of microcredit by 37.73% and 61%, respectively at 1% level of significance. The probabilities of a respondent having monthly and quarterly access to microcredit as a result of an increase in interest rates are 1.39% and 0.51%, respectively. Volume of microcredit from the DMBs reduces Poverty by 0.009% (micro) and 0.012% (small-scale) entrepreneurs. Poverty and Poverty are high among micro and small-scale entrepreneurs, this can be reduced by increasing the volume of microcredit and frequency of access to microcredit through policies that reduce interest rates and stringent collateral requirements for accessing funds.

1.0 Introduction

Poverty manifests itself in different forms depending on the extent and nature of human deprivation, an economic condition in which people lack sufficient income to obtain a minimal level of health service, food, housing, clothing, and education generally recognized as necessary to ensure an adequate standard of living (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia, 2020). Poverty is also when income falls below $2 per day (in 2005 purchasing power parity terms), (World Bank, 2020). In the recent World Bank's (2015) review, the new poverty line is $1.90 per day. The issue of poverty and its attendant socio-economic effect is a global phenomenon and has in recent times caught the attention of the world (World Bank, 2020). Poverty remains a substantial global problem of huge proportion. It is estimated that out of the world's over 7.2 billion, about 2.8 billion live on less than US$1 per day. Poverty in its extreme sense is highly prevalent among the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and manifests itself in various dimensions (World Bank, 2006).

Furthermore, the world poverty clocks current estimate is 1 in 2 Nigerians (82.9 million people) living in extreme poverty with also poverty head count at 52.1% higher in rural than urban areas where it stood at 18 %.in 2019 the states of Sokoto, Jigawa and Taraba states had the largest percentage of people living below the poverty line. The lowest poverty rates were recorded in the south western state which is Lagos. This figure equalled 4.5 %, the lowest rate in Nigeria (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020)

One of the means for poverty reduction that has however assumed universal acceptance and adoption in many countries of the world is the provision of microfinance services, particularly to the economically active poor. This is based on the belief that such categories of people only need financial empowerment to realize their dreams and unleash their potentials (Joana, 2015). According to United Nations Development Programme (2020), more than half of the Nigerian population lives in poverty. As a result, many people suffer deprivations such as insufficient food, school dropout, increasing costs of living, diseases and infirmities, inadequate shelter, lack of remunerative employment, exploitation and insecurity of life which often lead to criminality like insurgency, bunker activities, kidnapping and destruction of economic and private properties, death of many Nigerians (especially children) and high unemployment among others. The above problem robs Nigeria of its productive potentials. (Sharkey, Besbris, & Friedson, 2017) posits that poverty and inequality have a positive relationship with crime, this is because people living below the poverty level may be tempted to indulge in criminal behaviours to survive. This study will contribute to the literature and further clarify the impact of micro-credit on poverty among micro and small-scale entrepreneur in Jalingo, Taraba State. This is the third poorest state in Nigeria (National Bureau Statistics, 2020).

In addition, Small-Scale Enterprises (SMEs) as enterprises whose annual turnover ranges between N25000-N50000, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN, 2014). Defines SMEs as one who has a minimum of 5 employees with a minimum capital outlay of not less than N50000 (Ogundele, 2007). In the work of Awoyemi, Akomolafe, & Osunyikanmi (2020), the Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs) varies by country, a small enterprise in the USA does not necessarily imply a small

enterprise in Nigeria. According to the Small and Medium enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), MSMEs are classified based on the number of employees and assets value which exclude the value of land and buildings. The term micro-enterprise, also known as a micro-business, refers to a small business that employs a small number of people. A micro-enterprise usually operates with fewer than 10 people and is started with a small amount of capital advanced from a bank or other financial organization while small enterprises are those whose total assets (excluding land and building cost) are above five million but not exceeding fifty million Naira with the total number of workforce above ten but not exceeding fifty-nine. Most micro-enterprises specialize in providing goods or services for their local areas. These businesses serve a vital purpose in improving the quality of life for people in developing countries and generally provide a good or service in their communities such as clothing and footwear production or agriculture. Micro-enterprises not only help improve the quality of life for business owners but also add value to the local economy. It boost purchasing power, improve income, and also create jobs. People who support micro-enterprises and micro-credit say these opportunities give people an escape from poverty, providing them with viable employment opportunities and a regular income. (Kenton, 2019).

Global Overview of Poverty

The majority of the global poor live in rural areas and are poorly educated, employed in micro and small scale entrepreneur and under 18years of age. The work to end extreme poverty is far from over, and many challenges remain. In most parts of the world, growth rates are too slow, and investment is too subdued to increase median incomes for many nations, poverty reduction has been slowed or even reversed. The forty-three (43) countries in the world with the highest poverty rates are fragile or conflict-affected situations (FCS) and/or in sub-Saharan Africa economies facing chronic fragility and conflict has heed poverty rates stuck at 40% in the past decade, while countries that have escaped FCS have cut their poverty rate by more than half. Due to global shocks such as COVID -19 crisis as well as the oil price drop this trend probably will reverse in 2020. The covid-19 crisis will have a disproportionate impact on the poor, through job loss, loss of remittance, rising prices, and disruption in services such as education and healthcare. For the first time since 1998 poverty rates will go up as the global economy falls into recession and there is a sharp drop in GDP per capita. The ongoing crisis will erase almost all the progress made in the last five years. The World Bank estimates that 40 million to 60 billion people will fall into extreme poverty (under $1.90/day) in 2020, compared to 2019 as a result of COVID -19, depending on assumptions on the magnitude of the economic shock. The global extreme poverty rate could rise by 0.3 to 0.7 percentage points, to around 9 percent in 2020 (World Bank, 2020).

The global multidimensional poverty index (MPI) put it about 84.3% of multi-dimensionally poor people live in sub-Sahara Africa (558 million) and South Asia (530 million) for example 803 million multidimensional poor people live in a household where someone is undernourished, 476 million have an out of school child at home, 1.2 billion lack access to clean cooking fuel, 687bmillion lack electricity and 1.03 billion have substandard housing material. (UNDP, 2020). Countries like India and china halved the MPI valve; India (2005/2006-2015/2016) did so nationally and among children and had the biggest reduction in the number of multidimensionality poor people (273 million). China came close to halving the MPI valve. The countries with the fastest reduction in MPI valve in absolute terms were Sierra Leone, Mauritania, and Liberia,

followed by Timor-Leste, guinea, and Rwanda. North Macedonia had the fastest relative poverty reduction, followed by China, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia. In South Asia, 37.6% of people in rural areas (465 million people) are multidimensional poor compared with 11.3% (65 million people) in urban areas. Asia will outperform every other developing region and in early 2019, the world's largest continent will have an average poverty rate of below 3 %. (MPI, 2020).

From January 2016, when the implementation of internationally agreed sustainable development goals (SDGs) started and July 2018, the world has seen about an 83million people escape extreme poverty. But if extreme poverty were to fall to zero by 2030, we should have already reduced the number by about 120 million, just assuming a linear trajectory. To get rid of the backlog of some 35 million people, we now have to rapidly step up the pace. This notwithstanding the fundamental dynamics of global extreme poverty reduction we clear. Given a starting point of about 725 million people in extreme poverty at the beginning of 2016, we needed to reduce poverty by 1.5 people every second to achieve the goal and yet we have been moving at a pace of only 1.1 people per second. Given that we have fallen behind so much; the new target rate has just increased 1.6 people per second through 2030. At the same time, because so many countries are falling behind, the actual pace of poverty reduction is starting to slow down. Our projections show that in 2020, the pace could fall to 0.9 people per second and 0.5 per second by 2022. As we fall further behind the target pace the task of ending extreme poverty by 2030 is becoming inexorably harder because we are running out of time.

Table 2.2 POVERTY ESTIMATES FOR REFERENCE YEAR 2022, DIFFERENT POVERTY LINES

REGION	Survey Coverage (%)	$1.90		$3.20	
		Headcount Ratio (%)	Number of Poor (mil)	Headcount Ratio (%)	Number of Poor (mil)
East Asia and Pacific	91.9	1.3	28	7.6	1.59
Europe and Central Asia	87.5	1.2	6	4.5	22
Latin America and the Caribbean	86.6	4.4	28	10.4	66
Middle East and North Africa	50.9	7.2	28	19.8	77
Other High-Income Economies	71.2	0.7	7	0.8	9
South Asia	21.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sub-Saharan Africa	36.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
World Total	61.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

SOURCE: PovcalNet, also accessible through the R and Stata Packages. **Note**: Survey coverage is assessed within a two-year window on either side of 2022.
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Estimates for South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are not displayed since these regions have coverage of less than 40%. East Asia and the Pacific have continued their downward trend, reducing the poverty headcount ratio at the international poverty line from 2.3% in 2015 to 1.3% in 2022.

Figure 2.1 Global Economic Prospects
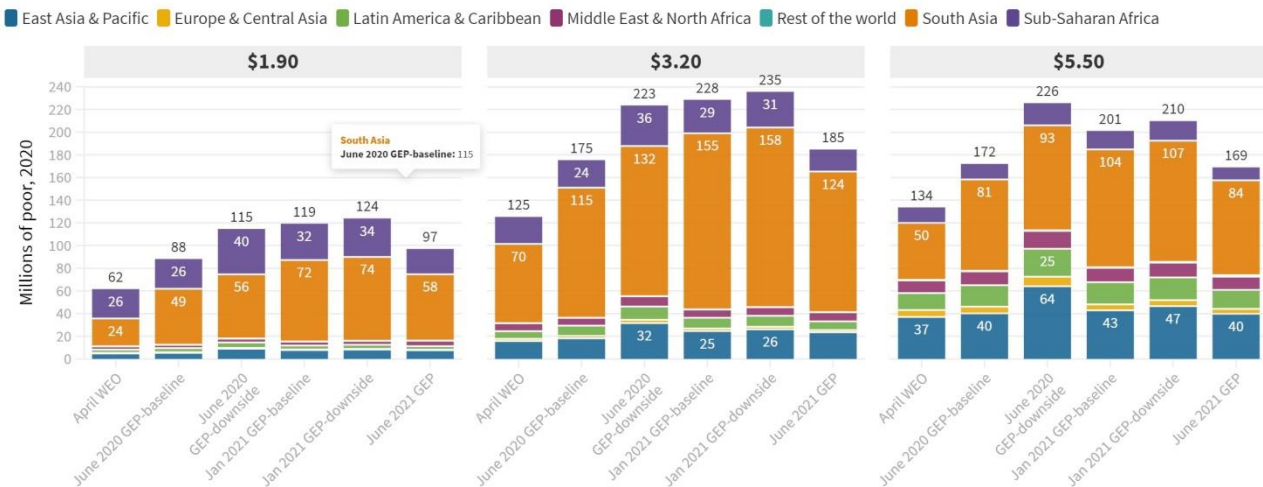
Source: Lakner et al. (2020) (updated), PovcalNet, Global Economic Prospects.

Note: This chart compares the change in the new poor using various growth vintages that have been available in 2020 and 2021. They include growth forecasts from April 2020 World Economic Outlook (WEO), June 2020 Global Economic Prospects (GEP) (baseline and downside), January 2021 GEP (baseline and downside), and the June 2021 GEP. All estimates besides the June-2021 GEP, are based on the September 2020 vintage of PovcalNet, so they may differ somewhat from the previously published numbers. The June 2021-GEP estimates is calculated using the June 2021 vintage of PovcalNet. Regional classification is based on the definition in PovcalNet.

Table 2. 3. Global Extreme poverty, 2015 -2022

	Global	Sub-Sahara Africa	Latin America	Europe & Central Asia	East Asia & Pacific
2015	744m	419m	23m	7m	42m
2016	719m	429m	24m	6m	35m
2017	696m	433m	24m	6m	29m
2018	571m	436m	23m	5m	25m
2019	655m	439m	24m	5m	20m
2020	732m	457m	27m	5m	24m
2021	711m	478m	25m	4m	14m

Figure 2.2. Global Extreme Poverty, 2015-2022
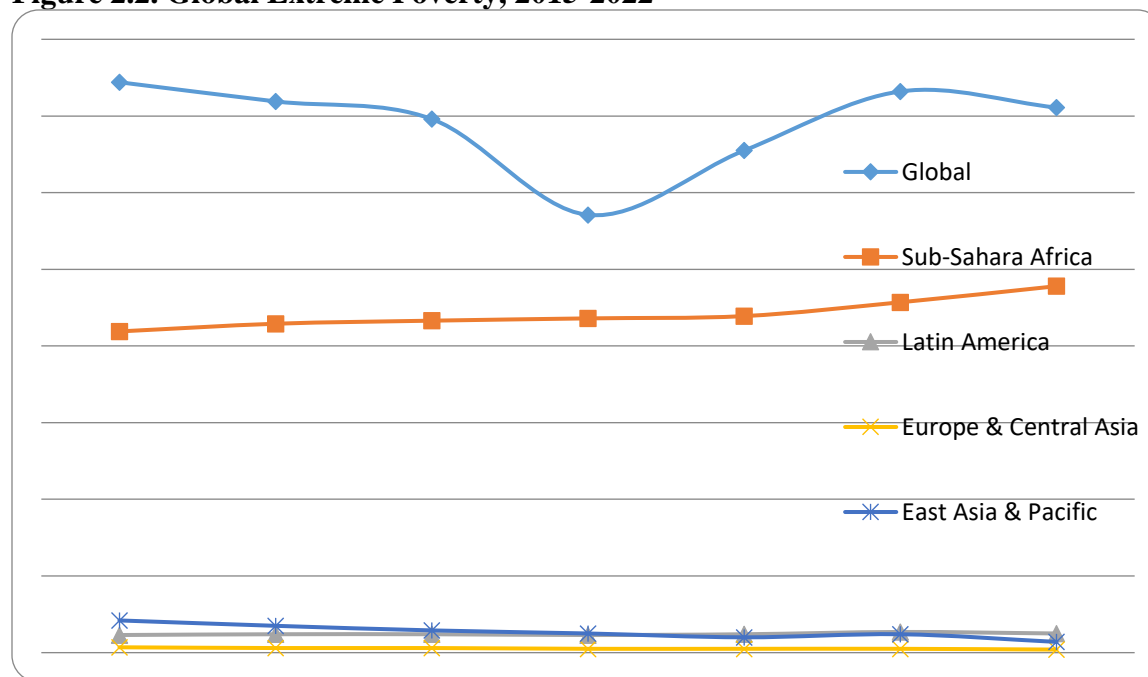
Source: World Bank 2022

Note: extreme poverty is measured as the number of people living on less than $1.90 per day. 2022 is the last year with official global poverty estimates.

From the above table and graph, the population of the world with people living in extreme poverty has continued to reduce from 2015 -2022; this period is term the historic period. The second phase is the period of pre-COVID 19, which is from 2018 – 2022 has shown serious reduction in extreme poverty, but immediately the global shocks such as COVID 19 crisis as well as the oil price drop, this trend probably will reverse in 2020. Above is the breakdown of the global extreme poverty.

The official poverty estimate are available for east Asia & Pacific , Europe & Central Asia, Latin America & Caribbean and rest of the world for up to 2022, and for middle east & north Africa and sub- African up to 2019 region are categorized using povcal net definition.

Poverty Profile of Nigeria
According to (NBS 2020) four in ten Nigerians or over 82.9 million Nigerians live in poverty with a population of over 200 million people and was estimated to constantly increase in the next decades according to the national bureau of statistics(NBS) in its latest poverty and inequality report which defines natural poverty as an annual expenditure below N137, 430 (N376.50 per day or roughly $1on N360/$) this is lower than a 62.6% poverty reported by NBS in 2010 using per capita approach, also Nigeria moved 11million people out of poverty in 10 years (NBS 2020). This is lower than a 62.6% poverty rate reported by NBS in 2010 using the per-capita approach. In 2019, poverty headcount at 52.1% was higher in rural areas than urban where it stood at 18%. With Sokoto (87.73%), Taraba (87.72%), and Jigawa (87.02%) had the highest poverty, while Lagos (4,5%), delta (6%), and Osun (8.5%) had the least. The report made in collaboration with the world bank also put the poverty gap or depth of poverty at 12.9%, meaning the poor people on average live around N18000.00 less than the minimum consumption required to be classified as poor. Here are states in Nigeria with poverty percentages according to the National Bureau of Statistics figure. The arrangement starts from the high to lowest in poverty percentage. Sokoto 87.73%, Taraba 87.72%, Jigawa 87.02%, Ebonyi79.76%, Adamawa 75.41%, Zamfara 73.98%, Yobe 72.34%, Niger 66.11%, Gombe 62.31%, Bauchi 61.53%, Enugu 58.13%, Nasarawa 57.3%, Katsina 56.42%, Kano 55.1%, Plateau 55.1%, Birninkebbi 50.2%, Anambra 14.8%, Ondo 12.5%   19. Edo 12.5% , Oyo 9.8% ,Ogun 9.3% , Osun 8.5% , Delta 6% , Lagos 4.5%.

Figure 2.3 Poverty Profile in Nigeria
Source: NBS, 2020.

According to their projections, Nigeria has already overtaken India as the country with the largest number of extreme poor in early 2018 and the Democratic Republic of the Congo could soon take over the number 2 spot. At the end of May 2018, our trajectories suggest that Nigeria had about 87 million people in extreme poverty compared with India's 73 million. What is more, extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by six (6) people every minute while poverty in India continues to fall. In fact, by the end of 2018 in Africa as a whole, there will probably be about a 3.2million more people living in extreme poverty than there are today (Homi et al 2018).

Nigeria Geopolitical Zones Poverty Levels

This depict the poverty levels of each geopolitical zone in Nigeria, from the chart north- west has the highest poverty levels in the country, follow by north-east part of the country, third in the chart is north-central, fourth is south-east, the fifth is south-south geopolitical zone , the last with the less poverty levels is the south-west . taraba state is part of north- east state and also the second poorest state, according to (NBS.2019) which prompt the research on this cases study.
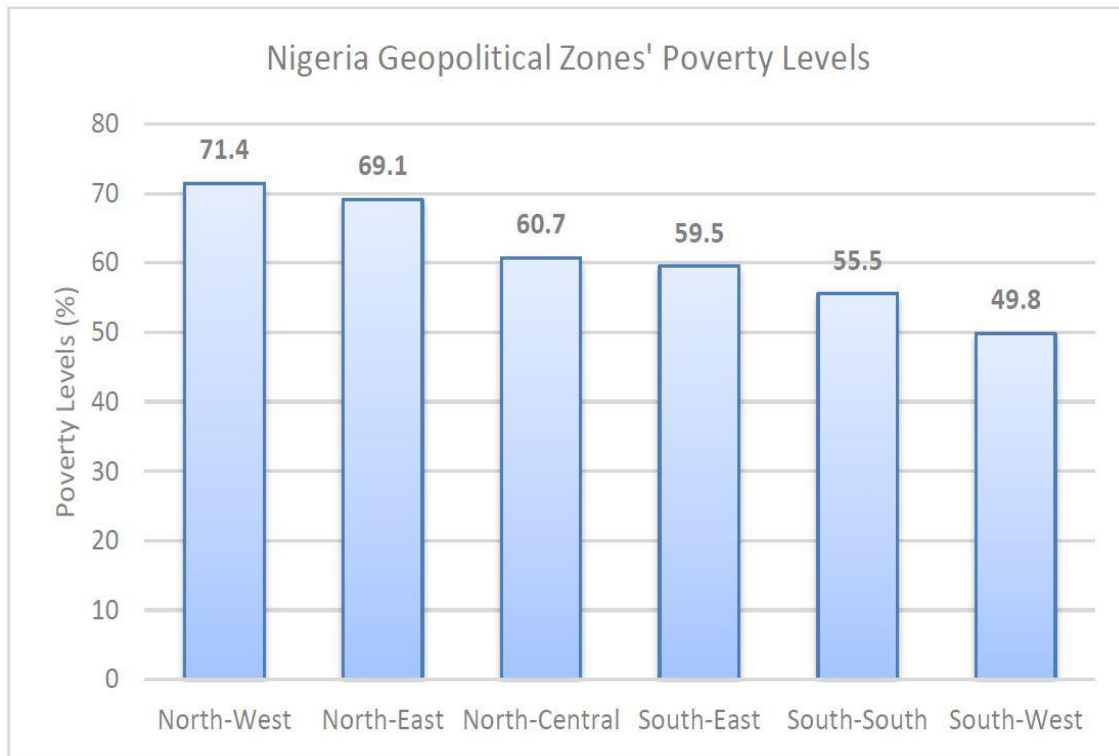

Figure 2.4. Nigeria Geopolitical Zones Poverty Levels

Source: NBS 2022

Table2.4: Poverty and Inequality Indices by States

S	Poverty head count	Poverty gap	Squared poverty gap
NIGE	40	12.	5.
Ur	18	4.	1.
R	52	17.	7.
A	30	7.	2.
Adam	75	27.	13.
AkwaIbom	26	7.	2.
Ana	14	3.	1.
Ba	61	20.	9.
Bay	22	5.	1.
Be	32	8.	3.
B			
CrossRiver	36	9.	3.
D	6.	0.	0.
Eb	79	34.	17.
E	11	2.	1.
E	28	6.	2.
En	58	16.	6.
Go	62	20.	8.
I	28	6.	2.
Jig	87	38.	20.
Kad	43	15.	6.
K	55	15.	5.
Kat	56	16.	6.
K	50	15.	6.
K	28	6.	2.
K	20	4.	1.
L	4.	0.	0.
Nasar	57	16.	6.
N	66	21.	9.
O	9.	1.	0.

O	12	2.	0.
O	8.	1.	0.
O	9.	1.	0.
Plat	55	17.	7.
Ri	23	5.	1.
So	87	38.	20.
Tar	87	42.	24.
Y	72	26.	12.
Zam	73	24.	10.
F	38	9.	3.

Source: Nigeria Living Standards Survey, NBS 2018-19.
Note:*The estimates exclude Bornostate.

Table2. 5 Poverty Headcount Rate by Household Head's Education Level and Sex

State	Non-education/lesst		Primary		Secondary		Post-seconda	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Femal	Male	Female
NIGERI	66.17	34.72	41.25	26.93	25.00	14.08	18.13	5.66
Urban	43.14	24.66	19.16	19.35	12.97	11.20	8.86	3.42
Rural	70.82	39.17	50.33	32.74	35.87	18.96	31.20	10.15

Table2.6Poverty Headcount Rate by Household Head's Income-generating Activity and Sex

State	Agriculture		Non-farm		Wage Work		Diversified		Apprenticesh	
	Male	Femal	Male	Female	Male	Femal	Male	Female	Male	Female
NIGERIA	58.76	37.75	25.45	19.45	17.53	13.99	46.90	31.54	34.24	24.13
Urban	30.11	27.96	15.22	18.12	11.87	11.38	23.92	24.99	18.60	11.00
Rural	63.20	39.02	41.68	22.48	28.72	21.14	53.25	33.79	47.14	34.81

Source: NBS 2019

Micro and Small-Scale Enterprises
The concept of micro, small and medium scale enterprises has been in existence since the 1940s. In Nigeria, the history of MSMEs dated back to more than six decades ago during the Colonial era in 1946 with a ten-year development plan that targets to promote trade and industrialization. The

central bank of Nigeria (CBN, 2004) defines small-scale enterprises as an enterprise whose annual turnover ranges between N25000-N50000. (Ogundele, 2007) defines SMEs as one who has a minimum of 5 employees with a minimum capital outlay of not less than N5000. In the work of (Awoyemi.*et al*, 2020).The term micro-enterprise, also known as a micro-business, refers to a business that employs a small number of people.

A micro-enterprise usually operates with fewer than 10 people and is started with a small amount of capital advanced from a bank or other financial organization while small enterprises are those whose total assets (excluding land and building cost) are above five million but not exceeding fifty million Naira with the total number of workforce above ten but not exceeding fifty-nine. Most micro-enterprises specialize in providing goods or services for their local areas. Micro-enterprises are small businesses that are financed by micro-credit, a type of credit facility given to people who have no collateral credit history, or employment (Kenton, 2019). They boost purchasing power, improve income, and also create jobs. People who support micro-enterprises and micro-credit say these opportunities give people an escape from poverty, providing them with viable employment opportunities and a regular income. (Kenton, 2019).The term micro-enterprise, also known as a micro-business, refers to a small business that employs a small number of people. A micro-enterprise usually operates with fewer than 10 people and is started with a small amount of capital which is less than five million advanced from a bank or other organization. Most micro-enterprises specialize in providing goods or services for their local areas. (Kenton, 2019). While small enterprises are those whose total assets (excluding land and building costs) are above five million Naira but not exceeding fifty million Naira with a total number of workforce above ten, but not exceeding forty–nine.

Table 2.1. Classifications of MSMEs in Nigeria

S/N	Size Category	Employment	Assets (=N= Million) (excl. land and buildings)
1	Micro enterprises	Less than 10	Less than 5
2	Small enterprises	10 to 49	5 to less than 50
3	Medium enterprises	50 to 199	50 to less than 500

Source: SMEDAN/NBS (2017)

Types of Micro and small enterprises

Micro-enterprises can collectively represent a substantial portion of the economy and employment. Types of businesses that are considered micro-enterprises include small market traders, Shopkeepers, farmers, Bakery owners, and caterers may be counted as micro-enterprises, just like hairdressers, dry cleaners, and private tailors. (Kenton, 2019).A woman in a developing country may use micro-credit to take out a loan and purchase a sewing machine. She could use the machine

to establish a micro-enterprise that specializes in tailoring. The woman would increase her wealth and help her community by providing a service.

Theoretical framework

2.2.6. Neo-Classical Theory of Poverty

Neo-classical attributed poverty to lack of social as well as private assets, market failures that exclude the poor from the credit and cause certain adverse choices to be rational, barriers to education, immigrant status, poor health, and advanced age, and barriers to employment for lone-parent families. (Davis and Sanchez-Martinez, 2014) holds that "the publication by Alfred Marshal of his 'principles of economics' in 1890 is considered to be the most important steps forward towards the advent of neoclassical economics". The attributed unequal initial endowments of talents, skills, and capital which determines productivity within a market-based competitive economic system, market failures such as externalities, moral hazard, adverse selection, incomplete information, uncertainty, and scepticism as aggravators of poverty, cited Davis, (2007). They suggested the following as some of the causes or channels of poverty, these are; the monetary approach, assets and financial/income risk, incentives, market failure and access to credit markets, human capital theory, ethnic minorities and migration, health, and demographics.

3.0 Methodology

Descriptive statistics using frequency distribution, such as mean and standard deviation will be used to understand the average value and the spread of the data series. Also, simple percentages will be employed to describe the basic characteristics of the respondents.

Maximum likelihood estimation is an estimation technique that determines values for the parameters of a probability distribution in a model by maximizing a likelihood function so that under the assumed statistical model the observed data is most probable. The parameter values are found such that they maximize the likelihood that the probability described by the model produced the data that was observed.

4.0 Analysis and Discussion of Results

This study applied descriptive statistics to reveal the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. It indicated that 517 (56.7%) of the respondents are male while 395 (43.3%) of the respondents are female. This shows that male respondents are the majority who engaged in micro-small scale enterprises in Jalingo, Taraba state.

Table 4.1**: Gender and age groups of the respondent**

Gender of Respondent	Frequency	Percent
Male	517	56.7
Female	395	43.3
Total	912	100

Source: *Authors computation (2023)*

From the Table 4.2, it shows that qualification of the respondents. It revealed that male respondents has the highest number in Jalingo, Taraba State. Table 4.2 shows that male respondents of 135(14.8%), 137(15.0%) and 52(5.7%) had primary, secondary and tertiary education compared to the female respondents that had 147(16.1%), 67(7.3%) and 33(3.6%) in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Table 4.2: **Educational qualification of the Respondents**

Gender	None	Primary	Secondary	Post-Secondary
Male	193(21.2)	135(14.8)	137(15.0)	52(5.7)
Female	148(16.2)	147(16.1)	67(7.3)	33(3.6)

Source: Authors computation (2023)

The relationship between Age Group and Gender

Figure 4.1 shows the relationship between gender and age group of the respondents. The relationship shows that 54 male and 96 female respondents were in the age bracket of 22-31. Also, 242 males and 116 females are in the age group 32-41. Also, for the respondents in the 42-51 age bracket, 112 were males while 136 were females. Furthermore, within the age bracket of 52-61, 60 were males while 26 were females. Lastly, in the age bracket above 61, 49 were males, while 21 were females. Overall, the majority of the respondents were males within the 32-41 and females within the age bracket 42-51.
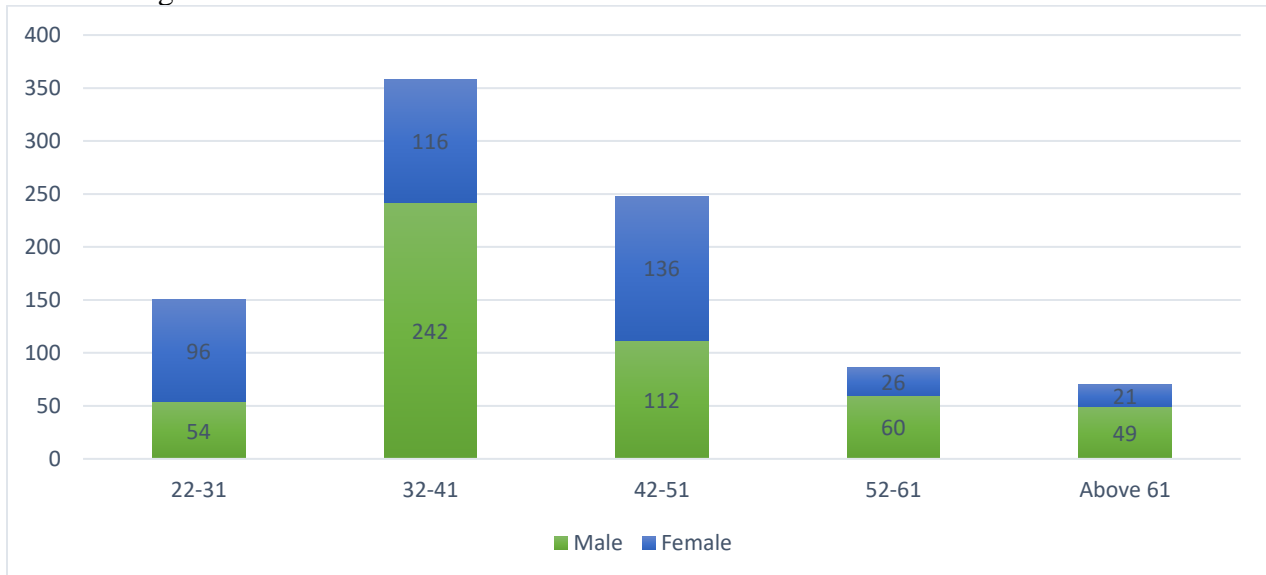
Figure 4.1: Gender and Age of the Respondents.
Source: Authors computation (2021)

Gender and Marital Status

Figure 4.2 shows the relationship between gender and marital status of the respondents. The relationship shows that amongst the respondents who were never married, 117 were males while 100 were females. Among the married monogamous respondents, 247 were males, while 199 were female. Also, among the married polygamous respondents, 72 were male, while 34 were females. Furthermore, among the respondents who were divorced/separated, 37 were males while 39 were females. Among respondents who were in an informal unions, 25 were males and 15 were females.

Lastly, among the widowed respondents, 19 were males, while 8 were females. Overall, the majority of the female respondents had married monogamous status, while, the majority of the males had married polygamous status.
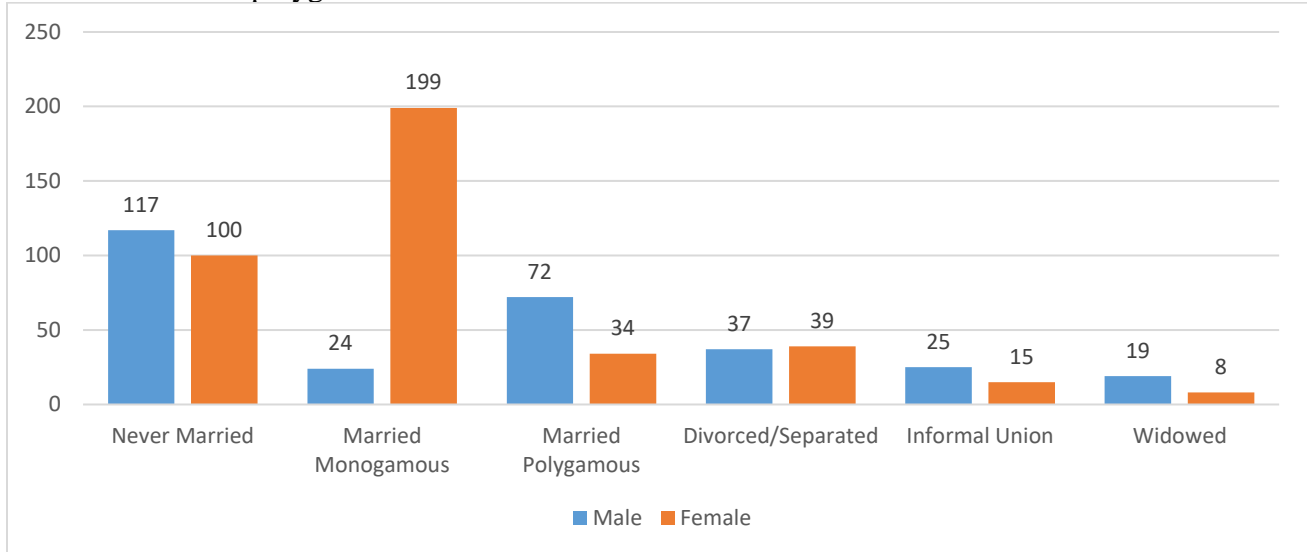

Figure 4.2 Relationships between Gender and Marital Status of the Respondents
Source: Authors computation (2021)

The characteristics of the micro and small-scale enterprises

Business Ownership Type and Position in the Business

Table 4.5 shows the distribution of respondents' business ownership types. The results show that among the respondents, 48.6% were sole proprietors, 24.6% were in the partnership business, 20.8% were into the cooperative, and 6% of the respondents were into limited liabilities. Overall, the majority of the respondents were sole proprietors. Table 4.5 shows the position of the respondents in enterprises. The results show that among the respondents, 74.1% were owners of enterprises while 25.9% were managers in enterprises. From the result, the majority of the respondents were owners of enterprises. Also, 79.6% run micro-scale businesses while 21.4% run small-scale businesses.

On the whole, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were sole proprietors, which is the oldest form of business organisation that required little capital to start and supervise, and also the majority of the businesses in the study area were sole ownership types. The majority of respondents on types of business scale is the micro-scale type which conforms to the figure of (SMEDAN and NBS collaborative survey, 2013).

Table 4.5: Current Ownership Type

Current Ownership Type	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Sole proprietor	443	48.6
Partnership	224	24.6
Cooperative	190	20.8
Limited liability	55	6.0
Total	912	100
Position	***Frequency***	***Percent***

Owner	676	74.1
Manager	236	25.9
Total	912	100
Types of Business Scale	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Small	186	20.4
Micro	726	79.6
Total	912	100

Source: *Authors computation (2022)*

Type of Business activity
Table 4.6 shows the type of business activities of the respondents. As seen in table 4.9, 48.7% of the respondents indicated that they were into agriculture, 24.8% were into wholesale/retail traders, 7% were into accommodation/food service business, 5.5% were in transport/storage business, 3.8% were in the business of information/communication and 10.2% were in the administrative /support activities. By implication, a greater percentage of the respondents were into agricultural activities which account for the major occupation of the people who are into farming, with root crops such as yam, cassava, and cereal crops such as maize, Guinea corn, millet as well as the rearing of domestic animals like poultry, sheep, goat, and cows.

Table 4.6: Type of Business activity

Business activity	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Agriculture	444	48.7
Wholesale/Retail Trading	226	24.8
Accommodation/Food Service	64	7.0
Transport/Storage	50	5.5
Information/Communication	35	3.8
Administrative/Support Activities	93	10.2
Total	912	100

Source: Authors computation (2022)

Number of Employees
Table 4.7 shows that 52% of the respondents who owned enterprises had 1-3 employees, 24.6% had 4-6 employees, 8.3% had 7-9 employees and lastly, 15.1% of the respondents who owned enterprises had 10-12 employees. From table 4.10, the majority of the respondents who owned enterprises had 1-3 employees.

In conclusion, the majority of respondents' business ownership business type is sole proprietor type that required few employees to manage the business due to the setup capital in the business.

Table 4.8 shows the distribution of the respondent's access to credit facilities. The results show that among the respondents, 32.1% had access to informal credit facilities while 67.9% had access to formal credit facilities.

In conclusion, the majority of the respondents had access to formal credit facilities. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents had access to micro-credit.

Table 4.8 shows the respondent's access to microcredit finance. The results show that among the respondents, 0.7% had weekly access to microcredit, 18.9% had monthly access, 10.2% had

quarterly access, 59.1% had annual access, 8.2% indicate that they had access to microcredit facilities once in two years while 3% are not available to access microcredit finance. From the result, the majority of the respondents had annual access to microcredit finance.

In conclusion, the majority of the respondents who obtained microcredit were from microfinance banks, which granted facilities mostly on annual basis to customers to enable them to engage in activities such as farming which required enough time from cultivation to harvesting of the crops to repay the facility without problems.

Table 4.8: **Access to Credit Facilities and** *Frequency of the Accessibility*

Access to Credit Facilities	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Informal	293	32.1
Formal	619	67.9
Total	912	100
Access to Microcredit Finance	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Weekly	6	7
Monthly	172	18.9
Quarterly	93	10.2
Annually	539	59.1
Once in two years	75	8.2
Not available	27	3.0
Total	912	100

Source: *Authors computation (2021)*
Foster, Greer, and Thorbecke (FGT) & Sen-Shorrocks-Thon (SST) Index Poverty Analysis

FGT and SST Measure of Poverty Level across Gender
The poverty levels across the female and the male groups as measured by FGT show that the poverty rate for males is 30.5%, while the females have a 31.4% poverty rate.

This indicates that the poverty rate is higher among females than males as a large number of females are people living in poverty. Similarly, the α_1 are 0.1232 and 0.1235 for males and females respectively, indicating that males and females on average would require 12.32% and 12.35% of the poverty line (N570.59) and (N 581.59) correspondingly to get out of poverty. The poverty severity as measured by α_2 is 0.0649 for males and 0.0642 for females, indicating the level of poverty intensity among males and females. The SST values for males and females are 0.1611 and 0.1657 respectively, meaning that the female entrepreneurs face higher poverty inequality comparable to the males. Moreover, the Gini coefficient is approximately 35.73% among the respondents, indicating that income inequality persists among the respondents. From the results in table 4.18a, it could be inferred that there is an existence of extreme poverty and income inequality among the micro and small-scale entrepreneurs living in Jalingo. The findings also imply that poverty is more severe among males than females, although the poverty headcount is more among females.

Table 4.18a Results of FGT and SST Measure of Poverty Level across Gender

	PVL USD$	PVL Naira	Poverty Headcount	Poverty Depth	Poverty Severity	SST	Gini Coefficient
Male	1.38829	570.589	0.30483	0.12317	0.06499	0.1611	0.35725
Female	1.41506	581.591	0.31469	0.12354	0.0642	0.16571	
Total	1.40189	576.177	0.61952	0.2467	0.12919	0.3268	

Source: Authors computation (2021)

FGT and SST Measure of Poverty Level across Age Group

The results in table 4.18b present poverty across the age groups of people in Taraba. The FGT values (α_o) for people with age group 22- 31 years, 32-41, 42-51, 52-61 and age above 61 years are 0.095, 0.196, 0.191, 0.09 and 0.05 respectively. This indicates that 9.5%, 19.6%, 19.1%, 13.9%, 9% and 5.0 % of the people within the age bracket of 22-31 years, 32-41, 42-51, 52-61 and above 61 are poor. The (α_1) shows that on average, a respondent within with age group 22- 31 years, 32-41, 42-51, 52-61, and age-grade above 61 would require 1.51%, 5.4%, 4.36%, 2.44%, and 1.47% of the poverty line (N712.1), (N528.5), (N602.2), (N518.9) and (N504.6) consistently to get out of poverty. The (α_2) values show that extreme poverty levels for people within the age group 22- 31 years, 32-41, 42-51, 52-61, and above 61 years are 3.67%, 8.72%, 8.16%, 3.48%, and 1.94 exclusively. The SST values are 0.025 (15-24), 0.055 (25-34), 0.064(35-44), 0.060(45-54), 0.0142(55-64) and 0.045(Above 65). The findings indicate that poverty incidence, poverty depth, and severity are obvious among entrepreneurs within the age range of 32-41years and lower for those above 61 years. This suggests that only a few people above 61 years suffer from poverty when compared with other age groups.

Table 4.18b Results of FGT and SST Measure of Poverty Level across Age-grade

	PVL in USD$	PVL in Naira	Poverty Headcount	Poverty Depth	Poverty Severity	SST	Gini Coefficient
22-31	1.7325604	712.0823	0.095395	0.015065	0.011885	0.036679	0.357246
32-41	1.2858112	528.4684	0.196272	0.05419	0.049507	0.087214	
42-51	1.4652768	602.2288	0.190789	0.043619	0.033401	0.081627	
52-61	1.2625253	518.8979	0.086623	0.02445	0.02104	0.034815	
>61	1.227784	504.6192	0.050439	0.0147	0.013354	0.019427	
Total	1.4018915	576.1774	0.619518	0.246703	0.129187	0.259762	

Source: Authors computation (2021)

FGT and SST Measure of Poverty Level across Business Activities

The results in table 4.18c present poverty across the business activities of people in Taraba. The FGT values (α_o) for respondents are into agriculture, wholesale/retail trade, accommodation/food service, transport and storage, information/communication, education, and administrative/support activities. This indicates that 21.27%, 11.40%, 6.69%, 5.15%, 5.04%, 6.69%, 5.70% and 6.20% of the respondents in agricultural, wholesale/retail trade, accommodation/food service, transport

and storage, information/communication, education and administrative/support activities are poor. The (α_1) shows that on average, a respondent in agricultural, wholesale/retail trade, accommodation/food service, transport and storage, information/communication, education, and administrative/support business activities would require 7.63%, 4.02%, 3.37%, 2.31%, 2.28%, 1.93% and 3.09% of the poverty line (N613.98), (N619.35), (N474.87), (N526.76), (N680.15), (N437.22) and (N576.17) respectively to get out of poverty. The (α_2) values show that extreme poverty level for respondents doing business related to agriculture, wholesale/retail trade, accommodation/food service, transport and storage, information/communication, education and administrative/support are 4.03%, 1.86%, 1.81%, 1.17%, 1.32%, 0.94% and 1.76% correspondingly. The SST values are 0.1015 for agriculture, 0.0488 for wholesale/retail trade, 0.02 for accommodation/food service, 0.021 for transport and storage, 0.022(information/communication), 0.027 for education and 0.024 for administrative support. The findings indicate that poverty incidence, poverty depth, and severity are obvious among people who engage in agricultural activities, while it is lower for those doing business related to education.

	PVL in USD$	PVL in Naira	Poverty Headcount	Poverty Depth	Poverty Severity	SST	Gini Coefficient
Agriculture	1.493883	613.9858	0.212719	0.076309	0.040312	0.101552	0.357246
Wholesale/Retail Trade	1.506956	619.3588	0.114035	0.040268	0.01869	0.048875	
Accommodation/food service	1.155406	474.8717	0.066886	0.033712	0.018139	0.028103	
Transport & Storage	1.281669	526.766	0.051535	0.023182	0.011769	0.020677	
Information/Communication	1.272794	523.1183	0.050439	0.022881	0.013221	0.020211	
Education	1.654869	680.151	0.066886	0.019372	0.009408	0.026313	
Admini/Support activities	1.063814	437.2276	0.057018	0.03098	0.017649	0.023701	
Total	1.401891	576.1774	0.619518	0.246703	0.129187	0.269431	

Source: Authors computation (2022)

4.7 Discussion of Findings

This section provides economic insights into the relationship between poverty, microcredit, and income inequality among micro and small entrepreneurs. The findings of the study started with the presentation of descriptive statistics, which provide the basic features of the respondents who are micro and small entrepreneurs in Jalingo, Taraba State, Nigeria. The socioeconomic characteristics of the entrepreneurs show that many are males without education. Many of the entrepreneurs are within the age group of 32-41 years and the majority are never married. This

implies that many of the entrepreneurs are young and without marital responsibilities. Only a few females have post-secondary education compared to males and within the age bracket of 42-51 years and have monogamous marriage status. Many of the entrepreneurs within the age range of 42-51, 52-61, and above 61 years are poor and the majority of those with none and primary education also suffer from poverty.

Interestingly, many of the enterprises are micro-enterprises and are in the categories of the sole proprietorship. This means that they are micro-businesses owned by individuals. About 48.7% of the entrepreneurs are engaged in Agricultural business activities and have several employees between 1-3. More than half, about 67.9% of the entrepreneurs have no access to microcredit and many only have access to microcredit annually. The main source of microcredit for many of the entrepreneurs remains the microfinance banks and the repayment period is usually within a year (12months). The findings show that many micro-business entrepreneurs are poor compared to those in the small-scale businesses and the entrepreneurs without access to microcredit are also poor.

The poverty level, using the Foster Greer Thorbecke Index (FGT) and Sen-Shorrock Thon Index (SST), shows that poverty incidence is higher among female entrepreneurs than males with a difference of 0.9%. The Poverty headcount, depth, and severity among the micro and small entrepreneurs in Jalingo, Taraba State in Nigeria are 62.95 percent, 24.67%, and 12.92% respectively based on the N577, which is equivalent to $1.40 per person per day. This is lower than NBS with 87.72 %, 42.38%, and 24.44% for headcount, depth, and severity respectively, based on the 381.75 per person per day (NBS, 2020). However, the poverty rates are higher than the World bank poverty estimate of 40.1% based on the national poverty line of N371.1 in 2018 (World Bank, 2021). This shows that in the pace of three years, the poverty level has gone up in Taraba state, this situation may be attributed to the dual COVID-19 and the oil price crisis in 2020 in Nigeria. The World Bank (2021) simulation results propose that the double COVID-19 and oil price crisis unaided could tip around 10 million additional Nigerians into poverty by 2022, higher than the slower rise in the number of poor people projected before the pandemic hit. Also, the differences in the poverty analysis may be associated with the sample size since the sample for the NBS analysis came from 600 respondents in Taraba State and the findings of this study are based on the available data from 912 respondents from the State. However, the poverty rate is much lower for SST at 25.98 percent, meaning that the entrepreneurs face higher poverty inequality in Taraba. Moreover, the Gini coefficient is approximately 0.36 among the respondents, indicating that income inequality persists among the micro and small entrepreneurs in Taraba State. Also, the value is higher than the NBS (2020) estimate for Taraba at 32,33%. Similarly, it will take female entrepreneurs more to get out of poverty depth than males. However, poverty severity was found to be higher among male entrepreneurs than females. Poverty analysis along with business activities also show that entrepreneurs in agricultural business record higher poverty incidence, depth, and severity than other business activities.

The findings of the effects of the volume of microcredit and the level of microcredit accessibility on poverty show that the probability that respondents who source credit from deposit money banks, microfinance banks, and relatives are 16.98%, 11.81%, and 6.77% less likely to experience poverty respectively. In addition, income reduces the probability of being poor, while repayment periods

of 3 and 6 months increase the likelihood of entrepreneurs getting poorer than repayment periods of twelve (12) months. This analysis indicates that the amount of microcredit given by the deposit money banks, microfinance banks, and relatives is welfare-enhancing, probably due to low-interest rates. However, Jolaoso and Asirvatham (2018) evaluate the effectiveness of microfinance in alleviating poverty in Nigeria and concluded that the method of repayment and income generated from business were two major factors militating against the effectiveness of microfinance in reducing poverty among various micro-economic agents in society. This condition needs to be addressed for micro and small entrepreneurs to effectively eliminate poverty among them. Also, respondents with monthly, quarterly, and annual access to microcredit are 43.88%, 48.56%, and 37.08% less likely to be poor than those who have access to microcredit once in two (2) years. Also, shorter repayment periods are more likely to inconvenience entrepreneurs and increase poverty compared to longer repayment periods. These findings are consistent with the evidence provided by Jolaoso*et al* (2018); Christensson, (2017); Ikpefan*et al* (2016); Igbatayo, (2006), that the microcredit program is capable of bringing the poor into the limelight if properly implemented. In a major study of micro-credit schemes in Nigeria, Odejide (1997) suggest that micro-credit schemes have the attribute of a ladder that helps people to climb out of the poverty trap and serve as instruments for stimulating savings to numerous poor entrepreneurs and promoting poverty reduction programmes at the grassroots. Thus, timely accessibility to microcredit with longer repayment periods are good elements of an effective microcredit program that could lift entrepreneurs out of poverty.

The findings of the factors that influence poverty among the micro and small entrepreneurs show that among the micro-entrepreneurs, factors such as married monogamous status, age group of 52-61 and above 61 years, interest rate, 3months repayment period positively and significantly influence poverty. Contrarily, years of schooling and income negatively determine poverty among the micro-entrepreneurs. Among the small entrepreneurs, factors such as married monogamous, married polygamous, widowed status, age group of 52-61 years, ownership position (owner), interest rate, 3 months repayment period positively and significantly influence poverty. However, trading business activity, gender (male) years of schooling, and income negatively determine poverty among the small entrepreneurs. According to Jolaoso*et al* (2018); Christensson, (2017); Ikpefan*et al* (2016), lack of adequate loan funds, inadequate institutional capacities, high-interest rate, little or no participation of the beneficiaries in the planning of micro-credit programs, lack of effective training programs for both beneficiaries and operators of the programs are some of the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of micro-credit as a strategy for poverty reduction among micro and small-scale entrepreneurs. The micro and small entrepreneurs often cannot meet the conditions set by conventional banks due to their economic status. Ugochukwu and Onochie (2017) examined the impact of micro-credit on poverty reduction in Nigeria. The result of the analyses revealed that microfinance loans made a significant impact on the loan beneficiaries in the study area which led to poverty reduction.

5.0 Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effects of microcredit and poverty among micro and small-scale entrepreneur in Jalingo, Nigeria. To achieve the specific objectives of the study,

the Probit regression model. The section (i) dealt with general introduction and section (ii) discusses conceptual issues, different theoretical frameworks, and empirical literature which comprises micro-credit, poverty, income inequality, micro, and small-scale entrepreneurs.

Meanwhile section (iii) contains the methodological process that aids the achievement of the stated objectives of the research.To achieve the main objectives of the study both composite measures of poverty were employed: Foster, Greer, and Thobeeke (FGT) and Sen-Shorrocks- Thon index (SST).

To achieve the main objective, other four specific objectives were formulated. Objective one (1) was to assess the effects of the volume of microcredit and the level of its accessibility on poverty in Nigeria, here we applied the Probit model. Objective two (2): was to examine the factors that influence poverty among the micro and small-scale entrepreneur here Probit equation that captured the association between poverty and the explanatory variable was also applied. Objective three (3) was to identify the factors that influence the volume of microcredit and the level of its accessibility in Nigeria here both multiple regression and Probit were applied. Objective four (4) was to examine the effects of the volume of microcredit on income inequality among the micro and small entrepreneurs were measured using the Gini coefficient. The prior expectation was that microcredit which is the variable had the potential to reduce income inequality and poverty which were the dependable variable.

The analysis was based on the 912 questionnaires filled out by men and women from Taraba. The FGT and SST indices were used to measure the poverty level among micro and small entrepreneurs. To measure income inequality, the Gini index and the coefficient were constructed from the excel workbook. Specifically, the Probit model was specified to examine the effects of the volume of micro-credit and the level of accessibility of micro-credit on poverty. The probit model was also specified to investigate the factors that influence poverty among micro and small entrepreneurs. The study further examined the factors that influence the volume of micro-credit and the level of accessibility to micro-credit in Nigeria using both Probit and multiple regression models.

The result found that the volume of microcredit determines poverty as the volume of microcredit sourced from deposit money banks and microfinance bank reduces poverty while the volume of microcredit sourced from relation increases poverty. Also, the level of accessibility affects poverty as monthly, quarterly, and annual access to microcredit decreases poverty while a short repayment period increases poverty. Also, many respondents agreed that access to microcredit has income inequality in their business thereby reducing poverty. The study showed that among the factors that influence poverty among the micro-entrepreneurs, marital status was one as people in polygamous families are more likely to experience poverty. Also, older age-grade like 52-61 and above 61 are more likely to experience poverty while factors such as average income and years of schooling decrease poverty. Also, among the small entrepreneurs, factors such as married monogamous, married polygamous, widowed status, age group of 52-61 years, ownership position (owner), interest rate, 3 months repayment period positively and significantly influence poverty. However, trading business activity, gender (male) years of schooling, and determine poverty among the small entrepreneurs.

The study also found that deposit money bank, a microfinance bank, cooperative bank, land collateral, house collateral, and year of business positively and significantly increase weekly, monthly, and quarterly access to microcredit while interest rate, moneylenders and micro-business scale increases annual and once in two years access to microcredit. Finally, on the effect of micro-credit on income inequality among micro and small-scale entrepreneurs it was observed that there is a negative and significant relationship between credit from commercial banks and microfinance banks on income inequality while poverty, credit from the bank of industry, money lenders, and relation has a positive and significant relationship on income inequality among micro-scale entrepreneur. Also, credit from the bank of industry and microfinance banks have a positive and significant effect on income inequality among small-scale entrepreneurs.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn, The Nigerian Government needs to create enabling environment for the smooth operations of microfinance institutions and the microfinance institutions should establish more robust microcredit schemes and institutional policy frameworks that will enable people living in poverty, micro and small-scale entrepreneurs without appropriate collateral, to have access to funds for farming and other business activities.

Therefore, the deposit money banks, microfinance banks, and other microcredit sources should enlarge their territories to reach more people living in poverty and give more microcredit access to entrepreneurs. This will help to increase the entrepreneur's income, economic empowerment and reduce poverty among entrepreneurs.

On this note government should provide funding for the establishment of micro and small businesses that older people can rely on to remain independent and productive. This will enable them to earn income and reduce poverty among them

Therefore, microfinance bank and other microcredit sources should reduce their interest rate, so that more poor applicants can be able to access these microcredit facilities thus increasing the impact of micro-credit among the poor.

Among others, this study recommends that microcredit sources should increase repayment periods. Repayment Periods (3 months) have a negative effect on the volume of microcredit; thus, a longer repayment period will enable entrepreneurs to get a bigger loan size and repay without rolling back debt.

The government needs to do more to educate the citizens on the real motive of savings. There should be a reorientation to these business owners which must be done even before any government intervention else those proceeds from the intervention may still be wrongly used.

Also, loan size should be increased to meet the requirements of borrowers, but this should be done very carefully depending on the ability of the client to pay and on the suitability of each project. This is critical for business expansion as the micro-business owners would need microcredit to be

able to expand their businesses and this will also create employment thus achieving the SDG one of poverty reduction.

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ur &Torruam 2012; Omitoyin&Sanda 2010; Aisha, Hafiz, Waqar & Mohammed 2014). This study, however, expanded the scope of knowledge on microcredit from the standpoint of poverty and gender and significantly contributed to scarce empirical knowledge on the relationship between microcredits, poverty, and genders among micro and small-scale entrepreneurs in Jalingo, Nigeria. Thus, the findings from the study are expected to assist the policymakers in the assessment of the volume of microcredit about factors that influence poverty and gender and in the development of policies to address them.