The Impact of Entrepreneurship Institutions on Access to Micro-Financing for Sustainable Enterprise in an Emerging Economy

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1. Introduction

The pivotal aim of micro-financing has been to provide to fledgling entrepreneurs the required financial and logistic support, decision-making, and management skills that prod its development, expansion, and viability, thereby optimizing the populace’s living standards as well as their economic well-being [1–3]. Entrepreneurial endeavours are recognized as key contributors to economic growth and sustainable development [4]. Their critical role in job creation, economic advancement, income redistribution, and welfare is gaining momentum amongst scholars and practitioners. The term ‘entrepreneurship institution’ is used to describe the collection of entities set up to offer support structures through statutory approval to further its course of enabling the viability and value-added interest of entrepreneurs [5,6]. For most emerging economies, entrepreneurship institutions account for 67% of emerging markets’ economic survival [7]. A CBN [4] study revealed that non-agro SMEs are crucial contributors to the economy, accounting for 25% of overall employment generated. Many emerging economies have faced and/or are currently facing the challenge of creating and sustaining their economic growth and development since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued financial recession. These nations have remained noticeably undeveloped in spite of the endowment of huge natural and human capabilities [8]. These issues are most severe in rural settlements. As a result, a
lack of proper infrastructure, poverty, unemployment, and the accompanying ripple effect of diminishing productivity in the agricultural sector have burgeoned. Ojo [8] further claimed that in a bid to curb the menaces and to improve their outputs, a majority of the impoverished populace has ventured into small businesses of various forms and sizes (entrepreneurship). Conversely, these entrepreneurial activities have been hampered by numerous issues, including a lack of venture capital [3] as well as poor micro-financing, an exponential rise in rural–urban migration, and the overarching state of economic destitution within these economies. Studies reveal that a majority of small-scale businesses and entrepreneurial financing comes from personal savings and microloans received from nuclear sources (family) [9]. Many entrepreneurs are unable to obtain capital from deposit money banks owing to a lack of substantial collateral [10]. Even with entrepreneurial education, training, and, in some cases, certifications, it is still not enough to provide required financing to budding entrepreneurs for start-ups or sustainability, as most governments’ microloan schemes have failed to foster the development, enhancement, and impetus of entrepreneurship and access to loans, especially for entrepreneurial ruralists. Pato [11] and Olaitan [12] described entrepreneurial ruralists and ruralism as individuals or entities that are formed in a rural location, which offer commodities made from local resources and technologies to markets outside of its locale. This concept is based on Schumpeter’s [13] concept of innovation, although it goes a step further by including a new characteristic, namely the rural location. Conversely, micro-financing refers to a set of incentives given in the form of credit, loans, or amenities to support economic transactions, or projects [14]. Despite its availability, there has been no concrete evidence of its utility. Wu and Yue [15] concurred, claiming that established measures have failed to meet their intentions owing to improper targeting, biased execution, and poor project evaluation and monitoring. Mwangi and Ouma [16] pointed out that micro-financing has not been able to reach entrepreneurs effectively owing to poor targeting, bias in granting the schemes, and, partly, the large concentration of entrepreneurs in urban areas compared with rural areas, making its reach problematic. Instead, some institutions that offer micro-financing are preoccupied with competing with deposit money banks whilst disregarding their primary aim of funding the start-ups or supporting rural entrepreneurs’ viability. Previously, entrepreneurship institutions were not held in high regard. Now, they have become one of the most promising mediums to promote the development of emerging economies [11,17]. The fact that there are significantly fewer prospects for entrepreneurs in rural areas is even more evident, consequently. From another perspective, the idea of entrepreneurship institutions implies that it is a type of endogenous support for entrepreneurs, which concerns the entrepreneurs’ economic–spatial dimension, thereby providing something extra to emerging economies [7]. Moreover, owing to globalisation processes that create new networks of global interconnectivity, entrepreneurial institutions stand to benefit from the wide variety of entrepreneurial opportunities emerging in these regions, including increased demand for recreational and rural amenities [18,19]. According to Woods and McDonagh [20], globalisation has a broad impact on the restructuring of less developed areas throughout Europe and, as a result, brings both opportunities and risks. Hence, the European Union (EU) views entrepreneurial institutions as a crucial element of its Europe 2020 plan to promote intelligent, sustainable, and equitable growth in Europe’s rural areas [11]. With notable exceptions, few studies have examined the benefits and repercussions of entrepreneurial institutions, particularly in developing countries and in spite of the topic’s growing attention and introduction of related surveys [1,17]. This study, thus, concentrated on how emerging economies’ entrepreneurship institutions can contribute to the viability of entrepreneurs and their ability to access financing. Young college graduates in the Aniocha-North Local Government Area of the Delta State in Nigeria have been encouraged to create endogenous, entrepreneurial, and innovative businesses in their community as a result of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) skills development initiative. The study adopted a case study methodology, drawing data from a questionnaire that was sent to the region’s most aspiring entrepreneurs, who are responsible for ensuring the survival of their businesses and initia-
tives. Currently, in Nigeria, endogenous companies and entrepreneurial institutions are introducing positive changes. With the creation of jobs for locals and increased national and international awareness of Aniocha-North, certain communities have experienced a revival of their socio-economic dynamics. Despite the focus on how important entrepreneurship is in fostering economic growth and other favourable developmental outcomes, the challenge of micro-financing, as it pertains to them and their business, has only recently garnered momentum and gained attention in the literature. This is because the context’s dialectics have not been able to focus on emerging economies and the entrepreneurs found in those areas [21,22]. Furthermore, there exists inconclusive literature that addresses the impact of entrepreneurship institutions on accessibility to micro-financing for sustainable enterprise from an emerging economy’s standpoint. This investigation, thus, seeks to redress this discourse.

The paper comprises four sections. In our assessment of the literature, we delve into the significance of entrepreneurial institutions and the significance of evaluating financing for sustainable businesses in emerging nations. The case study and methodological approaches are then presented in Section 3, while Section 4 focuses on the study’s findings and analysis. Finally, the key findings, the study’s limitations, and its contribution to knowledge and practice are discussed in the final section.

Study Objective

To examine the impact of entrepreneurship institutions on accessibility to microfinancing for sustainable enterprise in an emerging economy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Entrepreneurial Culture Theory

The propositions of Thomas Cockran’s 1965 theory served as the foundation for this research. The Entrepreneurial Culture Theory offers that entrepreneurial motivations and activities are influenced by environmental norms, social structures, and customs, which include cultural values, role expectations, societal approval, and social etiquette, amongst others. Cockran (1965) avered that an entrepreneur’s behaviour is spurred by the environment in which they find themselves. In his assessment, the theory traced disparities in entrepreneurial drive, positing that they are anchored on the origins and affiliations of potential entrepreneurs in the societies and environments in which they are domiciled [23]. Most emerging economies are a perfect illustration of this assumption. Citizens engage in entrepreneurship with the rigour that drives the economic well-being of the nation, propelling it into a more advanced economy. Entrepreneurs have been seen to delve into vital economic industries whilst providing approximately 65.8% of their country’s economic demands, hence requiring all forms of support, either financial or infrastructural, in creating a conducive economic environment, where economic well-being and advancement are imperative. Thus, Hasan, Khan, and Nabi [24] concluded that the demands of an emerging economy and the socio-cultural environment are responsible for the business-oriented drive of entrepreneurship.

2.2. Entrepreneurship Institutions

In the face of limited human and financial resources, entrepreneurship institutions are now widely seen as a critical mechanism that fosters economic development and activities in remote areas, promoting rural and urban development [19,25,26]. Institutions organize social relationships through networks of broadly recognized social norms [27]. These are social constructs that evaluate the necessity, value, or merit of a specific action or idea. Institutions are, hence, enduring social practices that are universally accepted. According to modern institutional economics, institutions are the industry’s rules that either support or obstruct economic endeavours [5,28]. Institutionalism-related ideas in the social and management sciences gave rise to this notion, supported by empirical studies [29]. This field of study frequently overlaps with institutional entrepreneurship. There are
disagreements over stakes, access, and resources in the institutional field, which is an organised system of social roles [5]. It comprises ambiguous regulatory and reputational constraints placed on a community of different organisations, including producers, clients, overseers, and consultants who engage in business activities. Since they are viewed as being socially produced within this context, participants and actors create a novel framework that connects the functioning of numerous institutional systems [30]. Combining concepts from institutional theory and entrepreneurship theory, the term “entrepreneurship institution” is used as a definition to describe organised participants who use support and approval for new institutional arrangements to further a value-added interest [5]. Since institutional theorists are interested in the behaviours and interests of entrepreneurial agents, one may understand their interest in examining how institutions, as structures and mechanisms of social action, arise, evolve, survive, transform, and affect behaviour. Lounsbury and Crumley [31] contended that by combining the ideas of entrepreneurship with institutional theory, the “blind spot” of neo-institutional theory is removed. Institutional entrepreneurs are thought to play a significant impact in the development of new fields as a result of their interest in the development of new institutional fields. This is because they assume an active role as strong agents, strategic actors, or institutional designers in the development of new laws and conventions [32,33]. Hence, the discussion of institutional entrepreneurship has assisted the re-orientation of neo-institutionalist analysis in focusing on the examination of players and their roles in sparking institutional change [28,31]. Henrekson [34] disputed the idea that the accumulation of production elements is what drives economic growth. These, according to him, are only immediate sources of growth. Instead, the incentive system that promoted individual effort and investment in both physical and human capital, as well as new technology, was the primary driver of development. The social game rules or the institutional framework, in general, served as the basis for this incentive system. In recent years, the role of institutions has once again become the primary explanation for long-term economic performance. Henrekson [34], in particular, pioneered the idea of institutions’ influence on entrepreneurial activity, including how rewards from society are distributed across various forms of entrepreneurship; some of which are predatory or harmful, while others are constructive. The reasoning seems straightforward at first glance. If institutions are established in a way that makes it advantageous for an individual to exert entrepreneurial effort to go around them, then they will do so rather than use the institution’s ability to minimise uncertainty and improve the quality of contracts and products. In this situation, it is anticipated that corrupt practices and predatory behaviour will triumph over the socially beneficial business. Yu [35] oversimplified the situation by assuming that the availability of entrepreneurial effort in society is constant and that the institutional framework merely affects how that effort is distributed among various activities. This is a significant function of institutions, but the institutional structure is also likely to have an impact on the supply of entrepreneurial endeavour. Further, the examination of damaging and counter-productive entrepreneurship also applies to developed economies. Although industrialised countries do a fair job of steering businesses towards fundamentally productive goals (which accounts for much of the income), there are also many examples of unproductive or predatory entrepreneurship in this context [34,35]. The amazing networks of illegal cigarette distribution and smuggling in Sweden, as well as the effective and efficient lobbying businesses in Brussels, are exemplary examples. The main conclusion from the aforementioned is that the institutional framework is the sole way to judge entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial action. There is no assurance that prospective entrepreneurs will spend their time and energy in a useful manner. Less prosperity will result from increased entrepreneurship if the institutional environment supports actions that are inefficient or harmful to society. There are many aspects of the institutional system that interact with the type and intensity of entrepreneurial activity, and this interplay is quite complicated and, hence, challenging to separate.
2.3. Accessibility to Micro-Financing

To enable continual survival, growth, and expansion of small- and medium-sized firms, micro-financing is a form of moral, financial, or actual support made accessible to them [2,9]. According to Wu and Yue [15], micro-financing is a planned initiative that was created specifically to ensure the viability of micro-businesses in both urban and rural locations. They are also described as initiatives that provide small- and medium-sized businesses with financial and non-financial resources. The non-monetary facilities provided for entrepreneurs include literacy, expert advice, credit generation and utilization, business forecasting, and legal services [2]. Literacy support services, such as training, public lectures, and symposia are all forms of non-monetary amenities. The provision of export and import processes or advising services also falls under this category; conversely, monetary facilities include loans and credit, bank overdrafts, credit purchases, and sales deposits. CBN [4] further claimed that micro-financing capacity to efficiently deliver these facilities goes a long way towards strengthening entrepreneurship capabilities, especially in emerging economies [36]. Micro-financing is diverse, which makes analyzing its impact or contribution to business growth challenging. It is believed that micro-financing can help a populace get out of poverty, although evidence is varied owing to the complex services that they provide. In another dimension, Ojo [8] asserted that micro-financing enables financial inclusion through the provision of credit/loan facilities for business enterprises. This present research concentrates primarily on micro-financing and its accessibility, as these are the most integral aspects that are important to entrepreneurs in emerging economies. Providing credit and loan services to small- and medium-sized firms has been a long-standing challenge in targeting micro-financing [8]. This poor accessibility is often encountered by deposit money banks, as there is no adequate sample of this group of entrepreneurs. The inability of business ventures, especially the self-employed, to have access to these credit facilities has been the basis for the establishment of micro-financing in emerging economies. Sambo [10] argued that the seamless access to micro-finance loans by entrepreneurs without interfacing with conventional banks has been a vital aspect of their growth since its inception, enabling their expansion, survival, and competitiveness in the economy. Micro-credit and lending services should be focused on the poor who do not have access to deposit money banks’ funds, as these loans are intended to encourage underprivileged citizens to engage actively in entrepreneurial endeavours [9]. Despite the growing rate of micro-financing, the majority of business enterprises continue to face financial challenges. In addition, their inability to compete with foreign counterparts in terms of offering innovative commodities has posed a significant barrier to them. It is, therefore, necessary to intervene by analysing how accessibility to loans or microcredit can help entrepreneurs in an emerging economy gain competitiveness.

2.4. Sustainable Enterprise

In works in the literature, the question of what constitutes the ultimate goal of an enterprise and its owners is still unanswered. Over the years, scholars and managers have engaged in much discussion around this issue [37,38]. Increasing sales, gaining more market share, or raising the asset’s market worth are common objectives in entrepreneurship assessments for some businesses. Others are concerned only with producing output for the owner or trying to remain competitive. However, no matter how these stakeholders choose to perceive the situation, achieving sustainability is a constant. Likewise, an enterprise is said to be sustainable typically when operations are domiciled, either in rural or urban areas, but with its products offered beyond its locale, thereby stimulating development [38,39]. Consequently, not all enterprises in urban locations are said to be synonymous with sustainability [21]. Sustainability can also be delivered or linked to an enterprise that is domiciled in rural areas but utilises strong urban networks and a sense of community to obtain resources, utilise them, and market the outcomes externally [40]. The nascent taxonomy in the sustainable enterprise context is ruralism, according to Pato [11]: the formation of new ventures in rural settlements whilst utilizing technology in its processes or merchandise,
offering innovative products or services, and creating a niche market [7]. Sustainable enterprises seek to create products that can be sold, as well as to act as a catalyst for change, by spotting and seizing opportunities for long-term success. Sustainable enterprise offers market-oriented solutions to curb environmental degradation whilst lessening social injustice and inequality to attain such ambitious competitive advantages [41,42]. It stands for the current shift in management and organizational studies towards a more thorough understanding of how businesses function in modern society. In contrast to traditional enterprise, which focuses primarily on maximising financial profit, a sustainable enterprise is built on the fundamental tenet that business owners have the potential to produce economic, social, and environmental value via their activities [43,44]. The phrase emphasises the intricate connection between economic players, such as business owners, the wider community, and the environment. Sustainable enterprise, as posited by Shepherd and Patzelt [45], is the pursuit of opportunities to create new goods, processes, and services to make a profit, with the term “profit” being used to refer to both financial and non-financial gains for entrepreneurs, the economy, and society. The preservation of the environment, life support systems, and communities are the main goals of any enterprise seeking sustainability. Instead of focusing solely on reducing social and environmental risk, enterprises should aim to create good social change and the restoration of the environment [21]. The sustainability of an enterprise, therefore, suggests that conducting commercial activities aids in the eradication of social injustice and environmental deterioration [43,45,46]. According to a different, albeit somewhat less well-known perspective, the convergence of economic, social, and ecological entrepreneurship leads to sustainable enterprising [37,47,48]. The integration approach to sustainability emphasises that to have a positive impact on how people and entities interact, all anthropogenic economic actors must organise in a way that respects natural boundaries. While compliance-oriented business models are considered to be weak examples of sustainable enterprising, this method discusses only strong ones, such as regenerative and co-evolutionary sustainability. Additionally, this viewpoint broadens the concept of sustainability to encompass an ethical and even spiritual sphere [48]. This is in line with descriptions of a form of enterprising that is sustainable in terms of both its objectives and methods to create wealth, while it also suggests that, at the very least implicitly; sustainable enterprise assumes more meaningful dimensions, such as a moral dimension, a technological dimension, and a socio-political dimension [41].

2.5. Empirical Insight and Hypothesis Development

Ojo [8] explored the influence of micro-funding on the literacy advancement of entrepreneurs in Lagos. Regression analysis and ANOVA statistical tools were used to analyze the generated responses from a sample of 60 entrepreneurs collected using an administered questionnaire. The results indicated that the micro-funds had a statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial literacy, productivity, and innovation. This demonstrated that entrepreneurs utilized micro-funds to propel their business intelligence, and it is an important support scheme for the survival of entrepreneurship. Lounsbury and Crumley [31] examined the issues from an institutional perspective on innovation. The survey research design was adopted, which included 200 enterprises that were chosen randomly for data collection, which was obtained via questionnaire. Simple percentages were used to analyze the data. The findings showed that enterprises’ innovation is mitigated by formal institutions and a lack of administrative support in enterprising. Garud et al. [5], Farny and Binder [41], and Schlange [48] have all observed that the concepts of sustainability and entrepreneurship are garnering momentum, but lack empiricism, recency, and empirical investigations from an emerging economy standpoint. The widening inequality between the rise in start-ups and their unsustainable lifespan is worrisome; in most cases, this is owing to inadequate savings or the non-existence of financial services for firms to maintain operations [36,45,47]. In these studies, a mix of the quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted, and their findings revealed strong and positive significance between the investigated variables. It, thus, proffered that the investigation into these areas is sought-after, which would broaden
stakeholders’ horizons on the means to remain viable and sustainable whilst mitigating the existent inequality observed in the literature [28,43]. Furthermore, Oni, Paiko, and Ormin [49] investigated the role of micro-finance organisations in the growth of Nigeria’s SMEs. A total of 260 micro-finance organisations were included in the study. The findings revealed that micro-finance organisations’ support to increase SMEs in the country is still inadequate. In addition, micro-finance organisations’ outreach in rural areas is low, which is a consequence of its morbidity and unsustainability over the years. In Kenya’s Makueni District, Kiiru [50] studied micro-credit institutions, entrepreneurship, and rural development. The goal of the study was to determine under what conditions micro-credit institutions create a platform for financial analysis to boost profitability in rural settlements. The study used panel data covering 15 years. It revealed that micro-credit institutions had no existing platforms to enlighten SMEs on financial analysis. Child et al. [33] also investigated the effects of institutional entrepreneurship in building environmental protection in China. Using a simple random selection procedure, 100 industrial establishments were chosen for the study. A systematic questionnaire was created to collect data. The findings showed a strong correlation between environmental protection and institutional entrepreneurship. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H0:** Entrepreneurship institutions does not impact the accessibility to micro-financing for Sustainable Enterprise in an Emerging Economy.

**H1:** Entrepreneurship institutions impact the accessibility to micro-financing for sustainable enterprise in an emerging economy.

### 3. Materials and Method

The inquiry, which integrated, synthesized, and assessed the collected data, was carried out by using the descriptive survey research approach. The collected data emerged from a well-structured questionnaire, constructed by utilizing a topic-specific five-point Likert scale format of queries to ensure that the research instrument was valid. Validation of the instrument was measured by using both content and face validity led by industry stakeholders and academic experts. This was performed to ascertain the correctness of the instrument and its ability to elicit factual and interpretive information required for data analytics. While ensuring the instrument’s reliability and consistency, a test–re-test method was applied, which is a repeated administering of the survey instrument that was conducted within a two-week interval. In doing so, the length of time between the administration and retrieval was considered because the shorter the time, the higher the correlation, and the converse. The correctness of the response of the survey instrument was evaluated by using a reliability test, namely Cronbach’s alpha, which yielded a result of 0.72 based on the inter-item correlation of five items on the questionnaire, which represented a high consistency of the questionnaire items and responses (see Appendix A). The research population figure comprised 711 active corps members from the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in the Aniocha-North Local Government District in the Delta State, Nigeria, who owned existing enterprises or small-scaled businesses for a minimum period of two (2) years. This set of participants was justified by the fact that they not only had a penchant for starting a business but were already operating one and participating in community-focused enterprising [51]. To determine the sample size, the Trek [52] statistical method was used. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire was distributed to the study’s respondents. Of these, 32 (12.8%) were not completed properly, while 218 (87.2%) were. The IBM Statistical Package for Social Science’s (Version 19 Software, Armonk, NY, USA) regression analysis technique was used to test the hypothesis. To analyse the gathered data, the following statistical tools were considered to be appropriate and were, hence, used: the structural equation model, simple linear regression, and Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient statistical tools. However, the choice of the regression analysis tool was chosen on the basis of its capacity to test data represented by ordinal scales, indicating an inter-
relationship between observed and latent variables. While adhering to the decision rule for research analytics, the null hypothesis ($H_0$) was rejected if $p < 0.05$ and accepted otherwise.

4. Results

Following the specific study purpose, which is shown in Tables A1–A5 (see Appendix B), this section summarises the respondents’ responses to the questionnaire items.

In testing the study’s hypothesis: $H1$—‘Entrepreneurship institutions impact the accessibility to microfinance for sustainable enterprise in an emerging economy’, the developed model summary is shown below, while the data presented in Tables 1–3 were produced by regression analysis. Model: $AMF = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EI + \mu_1$.

(Note: $AMF$—Access to Micro-Finance, $EI$—Entrepreneurship Institution)

Table 1. Model Summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Durbin–Watson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.415</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.66595</td>
<td>0.141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTIONS.

Table 2. ANOVA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>49.172</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49.172</td>
<td>110.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>236.826</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>0.443</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>285.998</td>
<td>535</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Predictors: (Constant), ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTIONS.

Table 3. Coefficients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-0.682</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>-3.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTIONS</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.415</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SPSS output 2023.

Discussion

In the Delta State of Nigeria, access to micro-financing is correlated with the presence of entrepreneurial institutions, as demonstrated in Table 1 by the correlation coefficient R, which had a value of 0.415. The proportion of the dependent variable’s variance that is explained by the model is 7.2%, according to the R square coefficient of determination. The regression model was appropriate, as evidenced by the low standard error of the estimate, which had a value of 0.66595. There was no autocorrelation, as demonstrated by the Durbin–Watson statistic of 0.141, which was less than 2. Since the F statistic’s significance value (0.000) was less than 0.05, the variation explained by the model was not the result of chance. The overall significance of the model was measured by the F-test, which follows an F-distribution. With a value of 0.415, the entrepreneurship institution showed a correlation with micro-financing availability, which was statistically significant ($t = 10.530$). Hence, it can be said that entrepreneurial institutions significantly improved access to micro-finance in the Delta State, Nigeria ($t = 0.415$, $B = 0.482$, $t = 10.530$, $p = 0.000$ 0.05). This implies that the existence, creation, and operations of entrepreneurship institutions have a direct and great influence on their capability of granting or providing entrepreneurs access to micro-financing. This result contradicts the findings of Pato [11], Belz and Binder [42], as well
as Lounsbury and Crumley [31], who in examining issues surrounding entrepreneurship sustainability, institutional perspective on innovation, and environmental viability, found that entrepreneurs’ innovation or viability of the locale is mitigated by formal institutions and a lack of administrative support for enterprising ventures. In addition, it disagrees with Chege and Wang’s [39], and Kiiru’s [50] investigation on micro-credit institutions, entrepreneurship, and long-term rural development, which revealed that micro-credit institutions had no existent platforms to enlighten SMEs on financial analysis and operational capacity. However, it corroborated Ojo’s [8] results in exploring the influence of micro-funds on the literacy advancement of entrepreneurs within the Lagos metropolis, which found that micro-funds had a positive impact on entrepreneurial productivity and innovation, demonstrating that the utilisation of micro-funds by entrepreneurs propelled their business intelligence, which is crucial to supporting their survival scheme. In their analysis of the function of micro-finance organisations in the expansion of Nigeria’s SMEs, Oni et al. [49] and Babagana [36] showed that while these organisations have a major impact on the growth of SMEs, they were still slightly insufficient, highlighting the lack of micro-finance organisations’ outreach in rural areas. Moreover, Child et al. [33] found a significant link between environmental protection and institutional entrepreneurship when evaluating the role of institutional entrepreneurship to promote environmental protection in China. Moreover, Muñoz and Cohen [43] and Shepherd and Patzelt [45], who observed the growing gap between the surge of start-ups and the alarming situation of their unsustainable lifespan, discovered that insufficient savings and a lack of financial services were to blame for not maintaining operations. While this study has also joined the position of Farny and Binder [41], Heikkurinen et al. [47], and Schlange [48] in emphasizing entrepreneurial ruralism as a strategy to attain sustainable entrepreneurship, all have observed that while the concept of sustainability and entrepreneurship is garnering momentum, it lacks empiricism, recency, or/and empirical investigations from an emerging economy standpoint.

Further research found that to produce sustainable entrepreneurship, institutions that can provide it with both financial and non-economic advantages must exist. This is because sustainable entrepreneurship is not sparked solely by an entrepreneur’s passion. According to Cazorla, Negrillo, Montalvo, and De Nicolas [53] and De los Ríos, Rivera, and García [54], entrepreneurship institutions are a natural consequence of a desire to assist business endeavours, entrepreneurs’ well-being, and the communities where they are located. These studies also suggest that the recognition of a particular environmental or social limitation can serve as the starting point for a sustainable enterprise, institution, or micro-finance process. Additionally, Belz and Binder [42], Ceron, De los Ríos-Carmenado, and Fernández [55], Nwankwo and Okeke [56], and Adejimola and Olufunmilayo [57] claim that entrepreneurship institutions understand the chance to address the challenges that entrepreneurs face whilst providing policies or measures that can be implemented as solutions. According to economic research by Muñoz and Cohen [43] and Shepherd and Patzelt [45], microloan programmes offer a chance to revive businesses and protect them from economic–environment-related imperfections, giving them a profit opportunity for long-term entrepreneurial sustainability. Entrepreneurs must be motivated to improve societal or communal well-being to engage in sustainable entrepreneurship. This result is also consistent with earlier research [58–60], as it shows that a distinctive aspect of micro-financing for entrepreneurs is that it makes available a collective resource for sustainable enterprising, which is essential for ventures’ continuing operations. Arguing that entrepreneurship institutions are typically supportive and collaborative rather than opportunistic also supports the findings of these studies. Due to its ability to foster cooperation and group decision-making at an administrative level, the formation, thus, seems like a natural method of structuring businesses [61,62].

5. Conclusions

This study’s outcomes indicate a distinctive impact of entrepreneurship institutions as a typical supportive and collaborative platform for entrepreneurs in emerging economies
owing to its understanding of the constraints and challenges faced by entrepreneurs whilst providing policies or measures that can be implemented to solve them. It also concludes that micro-financing, as a support mechanism for entrepreneurs, is a collective resource to sustain enterprises’ operations. However, micro-financing offers a chance to revive businesses and to protect them from economic–environment-related imperfections, thereby giving them a profit opportunity for long-term entrepreneurial sustainability. Therefore, earning sustainability, competitive edge, and profitability depends mostly on an enterprise’s adoption of an effective strategy, utilization of its unique resources, and core competencies/capacities. Analysis of this identified strategies towards improving an enterprise’s resources to offer adequate value to its clientele base. Modern entrepreneurs are now becoming aware of the need for a mechanism that impacts their operations, business environments, and continued viability, which is critical for sustainability. The concept of entrepreneurship institutions and their development in emerging economies is changing how budding entrepreneurs function, operate, and interact with customers and stakeholders. The major gains, features, and effects of this include sustained resource generation, utilisation of resources, and long-term operation. Entrepreneurs can utilize this mechanism or platform to sustain their operations and commodities, as well as maintain constant interaction with consumers and collect feedback from subscribers about their changing needs. In line with the tested hypothesis and the respondents’ responses, entrepreneurship institutions and micro-finance are pivotal strategies and platforms, which are required to deliver and achieve entrepreneurial sustainability over time within an emerging economy.

6. Recommendations, Limitations, and Suggestions for Further Studies

Governments, business owners, local rulers, investors, and all key stakeholders must espouse the need for the creation of unbiased platforms, institutions, or mediums to provide funds, sensitization, and access to loans, start-up capital, and any other funding means to budding entrepreneurs. Such outlook influences a heightened surge for entrepreneurship endeavours, thereby leading to economic prosperity, improved living standards, and long-term functioning. In addition, it improves their capacity to offer commodities beyond their operational locale.

The configuration of entrepreneurship institutions as a composite measure of sustainable entrepreneurial venture is one of this study’s limitations. The measures of entrepreneurship institutions could have been embedded and measured as a formative construct. Another limitation hinges on the study’s respondents (National Youth Service Corps members), as there are possibilities that findings may differ from other population sets, given their somewhat inexperience in the real sense of entrepreneurship. Thus, this study suggests that future research focus on the premise of the stated limitations by concentrating on other respondents/populations in addition to serving corps members. In addition, there is a need to examine gender, geographical scope, and tax incentives as factors that influence sustainable entrepreneurship and access to micro-financing.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, P.N.O. and F.E.M.; Methodology, G.I.I. and F.E.M.; Software, G.I.I. and J.I.A.; Validation, W.I.U.; Formal analysis, P.N.O. and F.E.M.; Investigation, P.N.O., G.I.I. and F.E.M.; Resources, J.I.A. and W.I.U.; Data curation, J.I.A.; Writing—original draft, P.N.O. and F.E.M.; Supervision, W.I.U.; Funding acquisition, W.I.U. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Research Ethics Board of the Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (protocol code: DBA-2022-015 and date of approval: 12 August 2022).

Informed Consent Statement: All participants in the study provided their informed permission.
Data Availability Statement: Primary data was used for the study which was provided by persons in the study. As such, there are no links to publicly archived datasets analysed or generated during the study.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A. Reliability Test Analysis Using Cronbach’s Alpha

Scale: All variables

Case-Processing Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. List-wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha based on standardized items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.722</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B

Study Objective: To examine the impact of entrepreneurship institutions on accessibility to microfinancing for Sustainable Enterprise in an Emerging Economy.

(Note: SA—Strongly Agree, A—Agree, U—Undecided, D—Disagree, SD—Strongly Disagree, M—Mean, STD—Standard Deviation, %—Percentage)

Table A1. There are governmental policies in support of rural businesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps Members</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A1 indicates that of the 218 respondents, 66 (30.27%) strongly agreed, 50 (22.93%) agreed, 9 (4.128%) were undecided, 44 (20.18%) disagreed, and 49 (22.47%) strongly disagreed with the statement that there are avenues, structures, and systems in place to encourage and assist fledgling businesses in rural areas.
Table A2. Structures exist to issue certificates or letters of incorporation for business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps Members</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A2 indicates that of the 218 respondents, 64 (29.35%) strongly agreed, 47 (21.55%) agreed, 26 (11.92%) were undecided, 36 (16.51%) disagreed, and 45 (20.64%) strongly disagreed with the statement that there are agencies for the registration, incorporation, and licensing of new or existing business.

Table A3. Loans and grants are offered with little or no interest rates for nascent enterprises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps Members</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A3 indicates that of the 218 respondents, 55 (25.22%) strongly agreed, 48 (22.01%) agreed, 12 (5.50%) were undecided, 52 (23.85%) disagreed, and 51 (23.39%) strongly disagreed with the statement that there are available microloans and grant schemes that offer little or no interest rates to new business ventures.

Table A4. Trade crafts and skill learning are encouraged, supported, and sponsored by local/traditional leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps Members</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A4 indicates that of the 218 respondents, 69 (31.65%) strongly agreed, 43 (19.72%) agreed, 15 (6.88%) were undecided, 49 (22.47%) disagreed, and 42 (22.47%) strongly disagreed with the statement that traditional leaders sponsor, encourage and support skills acquisition and craftsmanship.
Table A5. Products, brands, or services offered by emerging start-ups are patronized in urban areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corps Members</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>218</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A5 indicates that of the 218 respondents, 55 (25.22%) strongly agreed, 52 (23.85%) agreed, 18 (8.25%) were undecided, 39 (17.88%) disagreed, and 54 (24.77%) strongly disagreed with the statement that commodities and service offerings by merchants in rural areas receive patronage from consumers in urban areas.

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