



## The Impact of the Endsars Protest on Micro, Small and Medium Business in Kwara State

<sup>1</sup>SHITTU, Abdulsalam Abdulwahab

+2348034534652 | Business Administration Department, The Federal Polytechnic Offa,  
Kwara State

<sup>2</sup>AHMED MOHAMMED, T. Alhassan

+2348036996557 | Business Administration Department, The Federal Polytechnic Offa,  
Kwara State

<sup>3</sup>GIWA, Zarat Titilayo

+2347040528501 | Business Administration Department, The Federal Polytechnic Offa,  
Kwara State

Corresponding email: [abdulsalamshittu@gmail.com](mailto:abdulsalamshittu@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The study is designed to assess the impact of Endsars protest on Micro, Small and Medium business in Kwara state with specific objectives to find out the causes of the EndSars protest in Nigeria and ascertain the effect of the EndSars protest on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Kwara state. The study employed a descriptive survey design using questionnaire to collect data from Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise in Kwara State. 500 questionnaires were distributed only 480 was filled and returned. The study used multiple regression to analysis data via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The result revealed that EndSars protest had a significant influence on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study concluded the MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) account for a large percentage of the Nigerian economy. Recommendations were proffered in line with the findings of the study.

**Key words:** Endsars, Protest, MSMEs, Enterprise

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Micro, small, and medium-sized businesses were a key instrument for industrialized countries to achieve socioeconomic development. In recent years, the small-scale manufacturing sector has emerged as the backbone of modern economies, creating jobs in the informal sector, expanding the country's tax base, and raising low-income earners' salaries (Eniola, 2020). Up to the late eighteenth century, cottage industries, such as small and medium-sized firms, dominated Nigeria's economy. MSMEs are widely regarded as important sources of job creation and economic development in both developing and developed countries (Unachukwu, *et al.*, 2020).

The EndSARS protest movement began as a national uproar against the disbandment of Nigeria's Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a police squad known for its brutality and breaches of human rights. It was initially used in 2018 to draw awareness about reports of SARS officials' abuse and exploitation. SARS' structure was changed by the government, but claimed human rights breaches and exploitation continued. SARS personnel shot a youngster in the streets of Delta State without provocation in October 2020, according to social media accounts (Magdalene, 2020). Despite the fact that the Nigerian Police Force disputed the incident, popular fury intensified as more videos of police shootings were published to social media platforms. Youths gathered for support on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, and within days, demonstrators lined the streets of Lagos, Abuja, and other regions of Nigeria, demanding an end to SARS. Under pressure from the demonstrators' notoriety, the Nigerian government immediately announced the disbandment of SARS (Magdalene, 2020).

On the 7th of October 2020, youths in across the State declared and embarked on a three-day protest to demand the disbandment of the Nigeria Police Force's Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), as part of a drive for police reforms to eliminate the agency's extrajudicial practices (Oluwole, 2020). Youths were spotted walking to the Force Headquarters in Ikeja, holding placards that said "Protect, not exploit," "Nigeria police stop killing us," and other printed slogans (nairametrics.com). This was the start of a 14-day demonstration that devolved into violence. The protest was later hijacked by hoodlums, resulting in the destruction, vandalism, and looting of public and private properties as well as Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises across the country (Oluwole, 2020).

The ENDSARS has a significant detrimental influence on Nigeria's economic and commercial activities. This is because MSMEs are still dealing with the COVID-19's effects as a result of the country's commercial transaction lockout and shutdown. The ENDSARS demonstration exacerbated the damage to this sector, as many small-scale business owners lost their assets due to shoplifting and vandalism, as well as resources falling into the hands of miscreants who hijacked the protest (Olubiyi, 2020).

### Study Hypothesis

H0<sub>1</sub>: Endsars protest has no significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.

H0<sub>2</sub>: Endsars protest has significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.

H0<sub>3</sub>: Low turnout of consumer rate has no significant impact MSMEs in Kwara state.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (MSME)

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are business entities with less than 500 employees or a low turnover. MSMEs' definitions evolve over time and are heavily influenced by a country's level of development. As a result, what appears little in a developed country like the United States could be regarded huge in a developing one like Nigeria (Okere, 2020). A small business in the United States of America (USA) is described as one with less than 500 employees. In the African context, this could be a medium to huge business. Micro businesses employ less than five people, small businesses employ five to fifty people, and medium businesses employ up to 200 people and have a capital, excluding property, of around five million Rand (Chile, 2016). In South Africa, the phrase Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) is used, whereas in Nigeria, the term Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) was just coined (MSMEs) (Brigid & Chinonso, 2021).

According to the Survey Report on MSMEs in Nigeria (2012), micro enterprises have a total asset excluding land and buildings of less than 5 million Naira and a workforce of less than 10 employees, while small enterprises have a total asset excluding land and buildings of more than 5 million Naira but less than 50 million Naira and a workforce of more than 10 but not more than 49 employees. Medium enterprises are those with a total asset of more than 50 million Naira but less than 500 million Naira and a staff of 50 to 200 people (CBN, 2012).

Central Bank of Nigeria (2012) described MSMEs in this order:

- ❖ **Micro Enterprises** are enterprises with less than 10 employees with a total asset of less than N5 million (excluding land and buildings) and operated by sole proprietor,
- ❖ **Small Enterprises** are defined as entities with asset base of N5 million and not more than N50 million (excluding land and buildings) with labour force (employees) of between 10 and 49 while
- ❖ **Medium Enterprises** are defined as entities with asset base of N50 million and not more than N500 million (excluding land and buildings) with labour force (employees) of between 50 and 200 above. The agency envisaged conflictive position in the classificatory system and opines that the employment-based classification will take precedence. In the instance of enterprise with asset worth 52 Million Naira with 47 employees, the enterprise shall be small enterprise (CBN, 2012).

S/N	Size Category	Employment Band	Assets (N-Million) Excluding Land and Building
1	Micro Enterprises	Less than 10	Less than 5 Million
2	Small Enterprises	10 to 49	5 Million to Less than 50 Million
3	Medium Enterprises	50 to 200 and above	50 Million to Less than 500 Million

**Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, 2012.**

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) play a significant part in the Nigerian economy as well as global economies. MSMEs outnumber major businesses by a huge ratio and employ significantly more people. Given the sector's importance in employment, SMEs are significant for both economic and social reasons. In many economic

sectors, SMEs are claimed to be responsible for driving innovation and competition. In Nigeria, the majority of micro companies are owned and operated by single individuals (SMEDAN, 2012).

### **IMPACT OF MSMEs ON KWARA STATE ECONOMY**

With a population of 2.7 million, Kwara State is one of Nigeria's 36 states, located in the North Central geopolitical zone. It was established in 1967 and is made up of 16 local government units with fertile soil, a pleasant climate, and a tranquil atmosphere. Kwara State has 428,111 MSMEs, with 427,668 Micro enterprises, 415 Small Enterprises, and 28 Medium Enterprises, according to the Nigerian MSMEs Survey Report (2012). MSMEs in Kwara State are divided into three categories: low-growth, moderate-growth, and high-growth.

The growth of MSMEs has a far-reaching economic development impact on the Nigerian economy, leading to increased industrialization. As a result, Etuk *et al* (2014) concluded that MSMEs constitute the cornerstone of industrialization. Because there are several of MSMEs and they are composed of people who have deep understanding of resources, as well as demand and supply trends the primary source of feedback for larger businesses. MSMEs, according to Etuk *et al* (2014), typically have a vested interest in community development. They rely on communities for their workers because they are local. They supply goods and services suited to local requirements at prices that are affordable to local residents. They are a significant source of employment, especially for low-skilled employees, women, and young people, who typically make up the majority of the unemployed in emerging countries. Their flat management systems require their employees to perform various tasks, making them less prone to layoffs during economic downturns. Because of their small size and flexibility, they can more easily respond to local market swings and weather local market shocks. When rural settlements are well-established, migration to the city is often limited, relieving the strain on urban infrastructure.

The Kwara State Government considers Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as sure catalysts for socio-economic progress, as the nation's commercial and industrial hub. They are in charge of creating jobs, wealth, empowerment, innovation, income, and prosperity. Changes in employment and output shares, output composition, market orientation, and location of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are thought to be related to a variety of factors, including economic development, changes in real income per capita, population growth, and technological progress. As a result, the State is consciously driving the development of MSMEs by initiating and implementing policies that establish and foster a healthy business climate. This aims to expand access to networks and financial services in the State while also boosting technical and non-technical entrepreneurship capabilities. MSMEs role is always seen from perspectives of employment generation, contribution to export earning, and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Abdulraheem, Yahaya, Etudaiye-Muhtar, & Abogun, 2012).

### **ENDSARS PROTEST CAUSES IN NIGERIA**

In recent years, the Nigerian Police Force has been accused of human rights breaches, brutality, torture, and excessive use of force, as well as cruel or degrading treatment of suspected offenders (Amnesty International, 2020). Many Nigerians viewed the police, particularly SARs, as unprofessional, prompting and inspiring good citizens of

Nigeria, particularly youngsters, to demand that the police force be reformatted. The Nigeria Police Force's Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) was founded as a specific team to tackle armed robbery and other serious crimes in the country (Tomas, 2020). The SARS personnel are accused of profiling young Nigerians, primarily men, based on their clothing choices, tattoos, and hairstyles. They were also renowned for setting up illegal roadblocks, conducting unreasonable searches and seizures, arresting and detaining people without a warrant or a trial, raping women, and extorting young Nigerian men for driving exotic cars and utilizing laptops and iPhones. Nigerians have given personal accounts as well as video proof of SARS officers abusing Nigerian residents through kidnapping, murder, theft, rape, torture, unlawful arrests, humiliation, unlawful imprisonment, extrajudicial killings, and extortion. Young Nigerian men made up a big portion of the victims of SARS abuses (Kazeem, 2020).

The End SARS protest is a decentralized social revolution in Nigeria that consists of a series of public rallies against police brutality. The petition demands that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), an antirobbery unit of the Nigerian police force with a lengthy history of abusing Nigerian citizens, be disbanded. The protest is named after a slogan that began in 2017 as a Twitter campaign using the hashtag “EndSARS” to demand the Nigerian government disband the unit (Kingsley, 2017). Nevertheless, the agitation was only reignited in early October 2020, after a video of police officers believed to be members of the SARS squad reportedly killing an unarmed young man surfaced. Nigerian youth took to Twitter to demand police reform from the federal government, using the hashtags “EndSARS”, “Endpolicebrutality”, and others. As Nigerian teenagers shared their emotions and experiences online, the hashtag became a Twitter craze (Olisah, 2020). The Nigerian Police Force, through the Inspector General of Police, declared on October 4, 2020, that SARS officers and other Special Squads would be barred from performing routine patrols and other low-risk activities, such as stop and search, checkpoints, and roadblocking, with immediate effect. SARS was disbanded and replaced with the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) (Magdalene, 2020). This development infuriated the protesting youngsters, prompting them to establish new demands, such as ending lousy governance, ending corruption, and ending excessive pay for legislators, which trended on social media and at protest sites across the country (Olisah, 2020).

### **EFFECT OF ENDSARS PROTEST ON MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM SCALE BUSINESSES IN KWARA STATE**

The micro, small and medium-sized business sector of the economy is critical to the country's economic growth and development. Regardless of the global level of growth and development, countries continue to implement policies and programs that build and pave the way for the long-term development of their economies through the development of MSMEs. Micro, small and medium-sized businesses have been proved in numerous studies to be a catalyst for national economic growth and development (Afolabi, 2018).

One of the disadvantages of a group of people protesting in any state is the interruption of people's movements and enterprises. There are various motivators for people to protest, and one of the most important is a change to something nice and better than the ills to which they have been subjected. A protest is essentially a public demonstration in which members of the public express their opposition or displeasure of a



political notion or action. This protest can take many forms, but at its pinnacle, the people go to the streets to publicly vent their dissatisfaction with the government.

Protestors against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), marched peacefully through some streets of Ilorin, Kwara state capital, on Thursday, October 8, 2020, demanding that SARS operations be outright banned by the Nigerian police. Protesters encircled the Kwara State government house on October 12, 2020, when the Deputy Governor, Kayode Alabi, told them that their grievances had been heard on behalf of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq. The Kwara State Government imposed a 24-hour curfew in all regions of the state at exactly 11:49 a.m. on Monday, October 12, 2020, to prevent property destruction by hoodlums during the state's EndSARS rally. During the EndSARS protests, micro, small, and medium businesses were destroyed and looted (Sahara reporter, 2020). This has resulted in the loss of important resources and property belonging to the shoplifting victims. The demonstrators' obstruction of roads and the state government of Kwara' declaration of a curfew limited movement, contributing to a decrease in demand and supply in businesses and high transit fares (Sahara reporter, 2020). The majority of business owners haven't recovered from the effects of the Covid-19 lockdown, and some are still in the midst of financial crisis, hoping that once the lockdown ban is lifted, they will be able to make some sales and cover up some debts incurred during the lockdown, but the opposite is the case when some hoodlums hijack the protest and use it as an avenue to loots some MSMEs properties, causing a huge setback for their business (Fagbo, 2020).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

Due to the nature of the study, the study therefore adopts a descriptive survey design. This was chosen in order to access accurate and easy information from the research population through a well-structured questionnaire. Check & Schutt (2012) defined Descriptive Survey research as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions" This type of research allows for a variety of methods to recruit participants, collect data, and utilize various methods of instrumentation. Survey research can use quantitative research strategies (e.g., using questionnaires with numerically rated items), qualitative research strategies (e.g., using open-ended questions), or both strategies (i.e., mixed methods).

#### Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Kwara State has 428,111 MSMEs, with 427,668 Micro enterprises, 415 Small Enterprises, and 28 Medium Enterprises, according to the Nigerian MSMEs Survey Report (2012). Due to the larger population, the study adopted systematic random and purposeful sampling techniques. Out of the four hundred and twenty-eight thousand, one hundred and one populations of students in Federal Polytechnic Offa, Nigeria (428,111), a sample size of 500 which is 0.12% of the populations was selected randomly. The respondents were randomly selected to be given equal chance of being selected. The respondents cut across different departments of the organization. It also cuts across all the levels of organization hierarchy. The selection among the categories of business owners was done randomly. All these people were included in order to have a representation of all shades of opinions.

### Instrumentation and Data analysis

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, the questionnaire was divided into three section (A, B and C), The respondent's personal information is sought in Section A, while questions in line with the topic understudy is sought in Section B. The questionnaire was distributed to five hundred (500) selected business owners across Kwara State; 480 questionnaires were properly filled and returned, while 20 were not. Descriptive analysis will be used to determine the proportions and frequency of the variables. Correlation tests will be use to draw inferences about the population from the sample and Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) will be use to facilitate the data analysis. The results will be presented in the form of tables.

### IV. RESULTS

**Table 1: Demographics characteristics of the respondents**

S/N	Variable		Frequenc y	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	274	57.1
		Female	206	42.9
	<b>Total</b>		<b>480</b>	<b>100</b>
2	Age	25-35years	117	24.4
		36-45years	201	41.9
		46-55years	98	20.4
		56 years and above	64	13.3
	<b>Total</b>		<b>480</b>	<b>100</b>
3	Business Duration	0-5years	99	20.6
		6-10years	296	61.7
		11-15years	33	6.9
		15 year and above	52	11.3
	<b>Total</b>		<b>480</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2022**

The socio demographic features of the respondents in the study were reported in Table 1. 274 (57.1%) of the respondents are male, while 206 (42.9%) of the respondents are female. According to the age distribution 117 (24.4 %) of the respondents are between the ages of 25 and 35, 201 (41.9 %) are between the ages of 36 and 45, 98 (20.4 %) are between the ages of 45 and 55, and 64 (13.3 %) are 56 and above. In terms of business duration, 99% (20.6 %) have been in business for 0 to 5 years. 296 (61.7%) have been in business for 6-10 years, 33 (6.9%) have been in company for 11-15 years, and 15 (11.3%) have been in business for more than 15 years.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	P value.
MSMEs	0.436	0.165	2.642	0.007
I ran into loses during the protest	0.050	0.119	3.664	0.045
Majority of goods were looted	0.187	0.068	2.668	0.008
Low turnout of consumer rate	0.414	0.120	3.664	0.000
R-squared	0.8198654			
Adjusted R-squared	0.770224			
F-statistic	7.635245			
Durbin-Watson stat	1.556698			

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

The result in Table 2 above shows as MSMEs was utilized as dependent variable. I ran into loses during the protest has a p-value of 0.045 and a beta value of 0.050 which is not significant at all level. This implies that during endsars protest, majority of the MSMEs ran into loses and debt during the protest. This provides evidence supporting the rejecting of the null hypothesis one of the study which stated that endsars protest has no significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.

In respect of Majority of goods were looted during the endsars protest, the result has a p-value of 0.008 and a beta value of 0.187 which is positive and significant. This signifies that Majority of goods were looted during the endsars protest and this has a great significance impact on MSMEs. This provides an evidence to accept the null hypothesis two of the study which states that endsars protest has significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.

Also, the results on the table show that there is positive and strong significant impact of Low turnout of consumer rate with p-value of 0.0000 and a beta ratio of 0.414 at 5% significant level. This is an indication that the reward is appreciated and the increase is consistent with increase in organization productivity. This provides an evidence to reject the null hypothesis three of the study which states that Low turnout of consumer rate has no significant impact MSMEs in Kwara state.

The model reveals that  $R^2$  is about 77.02% implying that the variable used account for 77.02% variation in the dependent variable. This means that 77.02% of Low turnout of consumer rate, loses during the protest and goods looted, account for the variation in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The model also met the test of auto correlation as the DW statistics is 1.56.



## V. DISCUSSION

Having presented the results of the hypothesized in the previous sections, it is worthy enough to summarize such findings in a single Table representing all the findings of the study. Hence, Table 3 presents the summary of findings.

Table 3: *Summary of Findings of Hypotheses Testing*

Hypothesis	Statement of Hypotheses	Findings
Ho <sub>1</sub> :	Endsars protest has no significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.	Rejected
Ho <sub>2</sub> :	Endsars protest has significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state.	Accepted
Ho <sub>3</sub> :	Low turnout of consumer rate has no significant impact on MSMEs in kwara state	Rejected

Source: **Field Survey, 2022**

Based on the summary of findings of hypothesis testing, Endsars protest has significant impact on micro, small and medium Business in Kwara state. This is aligned with Abuede's (2020) findings, according to which the impact of the EndSars protest on the Nigerian economy is immense, unexpected, and thus inconceivable. Unattractiveness is one of them. Rating agencies may reduce it because the crisis has the ability to ease gradually.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our aim for this study was to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the EndSARS protest on Kwara State's Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). According to the study's findings, the ENDSARS protest had a significant influence on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises in Kwara State, Nigeria. MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) account for a large percentage of the Nigerian economy. It makes a considerable contribution to the economy's growth. It is the most important source of jobs, production, exports, and GDP growth. It is therefore recommended that the Nigerian government should recognize that SMEs are the heartbeat of any economy and should do all possible to ensure that their business is protected

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