

Micro Credit in Western Europe: Case Study of the UK (2010)

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With an ultimate urge to eradicate poverty from the third world nations the idea of micro-credit took birth. In the UK where estimated 3.5m people do not have a bank account or access to credit makes a royal ground for micro credit to play its part to deliver credit to this credit unworthy people to change them forever. Not so widely practiced micro credit is not new in Western world. In the UK the social welfare based system and the traditional credit system often creates a barrier between an entrepreneur and an entrepreneur to be. This paper seeks the view of the Micro credit and its related services status in the UK as per year 2010.

JEL Codes: G21, G28, 021

1. Introduction:

Financial freedom driven new ideas and thoughts have come up quite often in developing countries. Few of them got attention and Micro credit is one of them. With the rise of neo-liberal development ideology in the early '80s a great deal of emphasis has been placed on the development of micro enterprises through micro credit.

Contrast to third world countries in the UK existence of poverty is relative and to add with that social exclusion is a big issue. Nevertheless both of these problems generates from one source lack of finance or access to sources of finance.

Smaller amount of financing does exist in different member states of Western Europe in the name of personal loan, business loan etc. They merely are meant to turn a jobless person an entrepreneur as without a verifiable credit history or guarantor they are not going to get a penny.

However, in the UK in recent years micro credit is promoted by the Govt. and the building societies. The current status of the micro credit and the opinion of the people living in the UK are sought in this paper.

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2. Literature Review:

Micro credit is a small loan provided to people in financial difficulty intended to encourage entrepreneurship. These people do not have any demonstrable credit history or collateral to get access to mainstream financial products offered by various financial institutes. The idea of micro financing is not new. Locally arranged and managed credit facilities existed for years but it merely meant constituting a bridge towards financial freedom for the financially deprived section of the society.

Getting financed without any collateral is the main gist of micro credit offerings. Despite its critics it has achieved noticeable growth over the few years which are truly remarkable.

One of the lead workers in this field is D. Muhammad Yunus who played pioneer role to bring the concept of financial support to poor people of Bangladesh. Yunus(2007) in his book 'Creating a World Without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism' explained the way he had seen the establishment and growth of micro credit in Bangladesh. The focus was on how Grameen Bank and related companies succeed to give power to poor women and their families to overcome poverty. One of the interesting findings was the poor are indeed capable of problem solving and they often need fewer resources to pull out of the poverty. 16 factors that are used to measure poverty are very thoughtful. Yunus (2007) has presented some ideas for different models relating 'social businesses'. He advised to all maximum profit targeted companies to ensure they meet the basic needs of humans to help the society. In fact, creating social businesses normally use a fewer resources and needs less initiatives and with higher possibility leads to better result which is important to consider for western world.

Commonly, micro credit in the UK addresses two groups: "micro-enterprises" and "socially excluded people" these groups might desire to move to self-employment however cannot access traditional financial institutions. As micro credit can take different forms to perform diverse roles, in the UK it is predominantly used as a means of encouraging self employment and creation and progress of micro-enterprises. In most cases this links to promoting from unemployment to self employment status.

Barnes (2002), in his explanatory book 'Poverty and social exclusion in Europe' explored the nature and extent of poverty and social exclusion in six European countries, of them the UK is one. There are approximate 60 million people living in poverty throughout the European Union. The book pin pointed on four 'life course' groups: young adults, lone parents, the sick and disabled, and the retired who are in risk of social exclusion. In the book he sought the solution for social exclusion and tried to find out ways that lead those high risk groups in social inclusion; micro credit is indeed a useful tool to help the population at risk of poverty.

Rogaly et al (2000) also worked on poverty and social exclusion in England. They compared the existing successful models of micro credit and analyzed the probability of micro financial services to diminish poverty and fight social exclusion in England. They

figured out various ways to battle financial exclusion in England and discussed about enabling people to build assets at the same time gain capital, and supply instruments for the wealth retention in communities who were being left by banks.

Barbara et al (2010) in their edited 'Handbook of Microcredit in Europe' analyzed the current state of European micro credit and the way they are accepting and following the developing world model for economic development. He also examined how a particular country initiative fosters entrepreneurial behavior. Chapter 1 of the book summarized the standing of micro credit sector in the UK. With an overall analysis they focused on the role of Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) which is sovereign, sustainable monetary institutions offer small credits for different purposes. Their view was of social inclusion through micro enterprise development.

Misra (2007) in her book on micro credit looked at the global perspective of increasing unemployment rate. Her work suggests that with their vast network, the banks have to bear greater responsibilities. She has got a good point here as banks have got better and wider network it becomes easy for them to initiate innovative programs. We have seen one of such innovative idea from 'La Caixa' savings bank of Spain. They started 'Microbank' with a capital of 51 million Euros in June 2007 and currently using its branches to distribute its social and financial micro credits (ESBG, 2007).

Micro credit's achievement in developing countries has highlighted how micro loans can support people living at the bottom of the 'socio-economic pyramid'. However, critics argue that micro credit is not a universal remedy for poverty alleviation and it is not able to reach to poorest of the poor. However, millions of poor people from developing countries have benefited from microfinance services. In the rising micro credit sector in Europe more effort is due to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit and improve the operations of microfinance programs (Kolbmüller, B. 2009).

As per the statistics 20% of the rich people earn more than 80% of the global income; in a situation like this no development will be sustainable unless the income gap is reduced (Rogers 2008). Micro credit or the broader term micro finance is an example of an innovative way by which banks can foster sustainable banking. In England HSBC and Lloyds TSB bank is already playing a significant role in providing micro funds to the (relatively) poor segment of the society to overcome social exclusion.

In future there will be more challenges for micro credit system as there will be demand of widening the target group to reach to the poorest of the poor to achieve financial sustainability. As donation is not a secure source of funding sooner or later the microfinance institutes will need to access non donor source of financing that can come by mobilizing the savings money of the members or can be from commercial banks or other sources. Creating 'National Autonomous Fund' and innovating risk responsive financial products will be a key concern in upcoming days (Ahmed, 2001).

After going through the existing literatures in micro credit field, conclusion can be made that, it is neither flawless nor it's the panacea for poverty. However, definitely it has the

ability to change the prospect of poor people that is a great achievement on its own. Every poor is an entrepreneur might sound too much optimistic to some critiques but with proper training and knowledge anyone can change his/her future. The social inclusion of the high risk groups is something that each and every European country cherishes. Provision of micro credit through different channels to those people and micro enterprises will surely play a positive role in their economy.

Future researches will involve study of the challenges that micro credit system and institutions are going to face in future and how Europe incorporates micro finance in their economy. Sustainable development of the society in the means of economic, social and environmental fostered by micro financing might also include in further studies.

3. The Methodology and Model:

The conceptual framework of the study can be illustrated by the Figure 1:

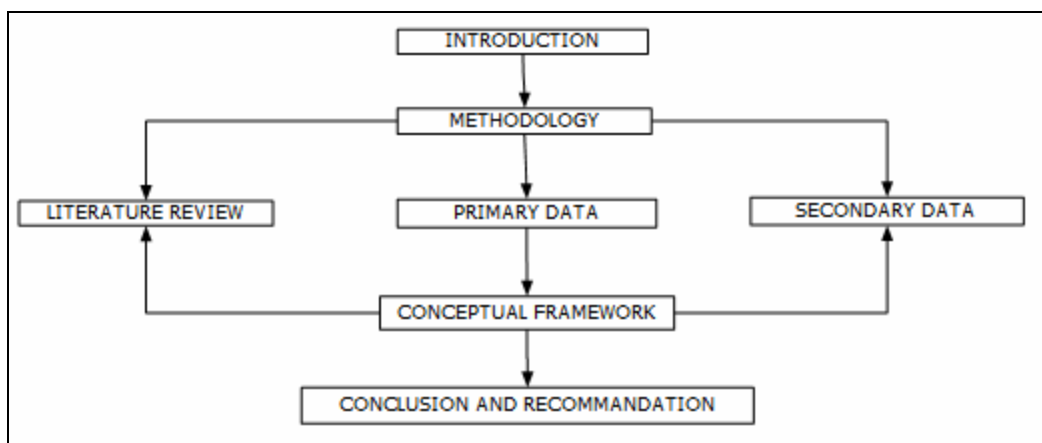


Fig 1: Research Framework

Primary:

A relatively limited amount of primary research was undertaken in form of questionnaire. The primary data were gathered through two surveys by questionnaire to evaluate prospective consumers' attitude toward micro-credit and its facilities. The first survey was for individuals and number of participants was 200. The next survey was for financial institutes. 20 bank/building society, MFIs, CDFIs and other micro fund lenders were surveyed to judge the current policies and its future.

Secondary:

Relevant data regarding micro-credit and its framework in different countries is being gathered through books, journals, newspaper and internet or other sources.

Research strategy of the whole research was 'Survey', because of its advantage of representing huge amount of data from a sizeable population in an economically efficient way.

3.1 Data Collection

Quantitative data collection method was chosen for the research. As for convenience, the first set of survey questionnaires were being used to survey 200 residents of London residing in 10 different boroughs. They were conducted face-face. For the second survey 20 high street bank/building society and other financing institutes were approached and most of the survey was one-one; a few were sent electronically via internet and received as emails.

3.2 Piloting and Sampling the Population

Before conducting the survey a pilot test with 25 people and 5 financial institutions was done to assure that respondents will have no problems in answering the questions. The pilot test was 98% successful. A few corrections were made for better understanding of the respondent.

Sampling the population was a very important part of the survey. 'Simple Random Sampling' was used to minimize the bias and simplify the data analysis.

3.4 Limitation of Sampling

'Simple Random Sampling' is vulnerable to sampling error as the randomness of the selection of population might result in a sample that doesn't reflect the actual intended population. As the sample size is relatively smaller considering the total population of the UK, it is presumed that the survey result will deviate to some extent from the actual scenario.

4. The UK and Micro Credit System: A Close Look

In the UK, micro credit is not to be introduced as a new financial instrument. It is well known in this region as personal loan or small business loan. We will look at the scope it has in today's time in the UK.

4.1 Entrepreneurial context

GDP growth is good in the UK in 2007 in was 3.07% and in 2008 due to economic downfall it went down to 0.707%. Informal sector is small but it's fairly easy to get self employed.

In the UK currently 11 per cent of economically active people are self-employed. Women and some ethnic groups such as Black or Black British are currently under-represented amongst the self-employed while both groups have been identified as over-represented in the at-risk-of-poverty group.

4.2 Policy Measures Promoting Micro-enterprises

In the UK, Government has identified easy access to financial services and affordable credit as a means of combating poverty. It helped small firms by identifying seven strategic themes and key drivers:

1. Fostering enterprise as a culture.
2. Encouraging dynamic start-up market.
3. Encouraging disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups.
4. Improving access to finance for SME.
5. Developing better regulation and policy.
6. Improving small businesses' experience of government services.
7. Building the potential for SME growth.

The UK Government is constantly encouraging and pressuring financial institutions to provide services to socially excluded group. The Treasury's Social Investment Task Force encouraged voluntary bank disclosure. However there are no real incentives present at the moment for this. Incentives has being provided for CDFIs in means of community investment tax relief and the Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme provides an incentive for banks to lend to businesses that they may not normally lend to. There are many co-ordinated initiatives at policy level with different actors to get self-employment and financial and non-financial support for it.

- (1) The Bank of England is financing SMEs with full of interest.
- (2) The FSA is interested in CDFIs from the perspective of consumer protection.
- (3) The British Bankers' Association is promoting financial Inclusion.
- (4) The SBS (Small Business Service) is working on on finance for SMEs.

- (5) There is a national network of enterprise agencies.
- (6) There are a large number of growth and regeneration initiatives across the UK.
- (7) The Small Business Service's Phoenix Fund provides grants for CDFIs targeting micro enterprises. HM Treasury is also working on this issue, and has widened the availability of the Small Firms Loan Guarantee, and has widened the Research and Development (R&D) tax credit to include smaller and entrepreneurial businesses.
- (8) Regional and local programmes are more variable.
- (9) The environment for micro-enterprises is also favorable in the UK.

4.3 Transform Benefit System to Encourage Self employment

Moving from the benefits system to self-employment can be tough. The Government is trying to tackle this through tax credit benefit and by giving test trading period. However, the system does not give the flexibility to new businesses, with variable returns and an extended set-up period. Some of the barriers that still exist include the low amount that can be earned without it affecting the receipt of benefits. There is no separate programme for the self-employed. Self-employment is an option in more general employment and training schemes. The New Deal for the Self employed provides support which includes a six-month test-trading period, during this time they still receive the benefits and the money they get back must put back on the business.

Work-based Learning for Adults (or Training for Work) is a well thought idea but the eligibility criteria and support is too restrictive.

4.4 Legal Framework for Micro-Credit and Related Services

The UK possesses light touch regulation where non-banks can lend and there is no ceiling on interest rates. Nevertheless, lenders in the UK have to obey with the Consumer Credit Act. This regulatory environment helps micro financed institutions to become operational and sustainable, but it raises questions on consumer protection against predatory lending. Therefore there are debates whether a usury law should be developed so that predatory lending is prevented.

Figure 2 gives an overview of the interest rates charged by 32 MFIs that participated in the EMN research in 2004. It is clear that interest rates in the UK are much higher than in other countries.

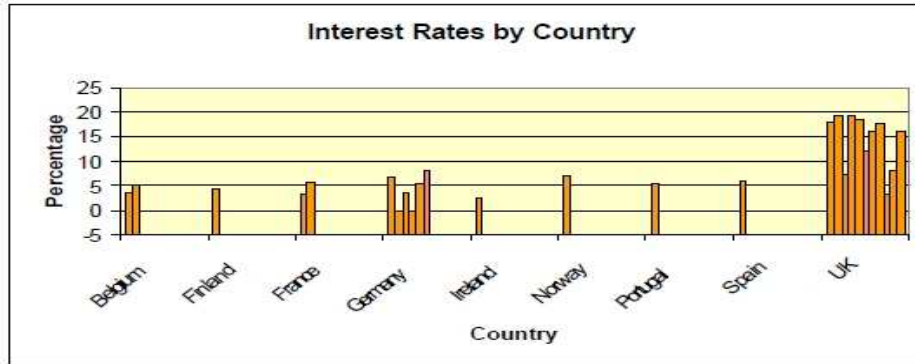


Figure 2: Interest rates by country

4.5 Financial Bridge

Subjective evidence suggests that opening a business bank account can be difficult for micro-enterprises, and there are no structured business loans on offer for micro-enterprises.

There is an excellent level of engagement between banks and MFIs in the UK but not yet at a commercial level. The banks do not co-finance the loans, but provide financial support for MFIs in the form of gifts and subsidies. The micro-entrepreneurs should be considered for mainstream financial products otherwise economic inclusion will not be visible.

6.6 Funding and Support for Micro-Credit Providers

There are two types of micro-credit organizations that have different visions on sustainability:

1) Subsidised facilitators: whose principle is to create the non-bankable people bankable and assist people to start and move towards sustainable activity.

2) Self-sufficient providers: Sustainable availability of micro-finance services are necessary. Charitable trust and foundations like 'Phoenix Fund' has given strong grant support to MFIs in the UK. As per 'The Charity Commission' programme oriented investment is now possible. Despite this effort very few charitable trusts and foundations have so far taken this up. The community investment tax relief will also support venture from organizations and individuals.

5. Data Analysis and Presentation

As an integral part of the research work it was necessary to conduct a survey to judge the present situation. The findings from the survey are being analyzed in this chapter.

5.1 Individual Survey

The data collected from the individual survey is presented below:

Question 1: Which Age group do you belong to?

- A. 0-16
- B. 17-30
- C. 31-50
- D. 50-70
- E. 70+

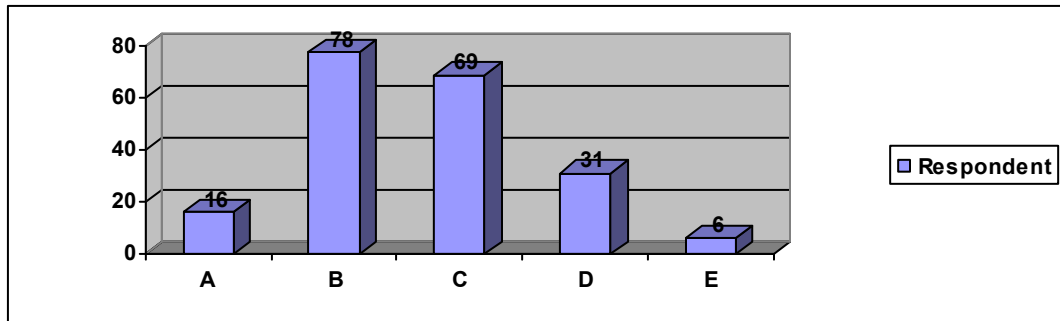


Figure 3 : Question 1 [Individual]

So from the graph we can see the population the survey addressed was mostly people between 17-50 age groups. It is a very good population sample as it covers the traditional 'can work' category of people.

Question 2: Your occupational status?

- A. Student
- B. Self employed
- C. Working either as private or govt. employee
- D. Jobless

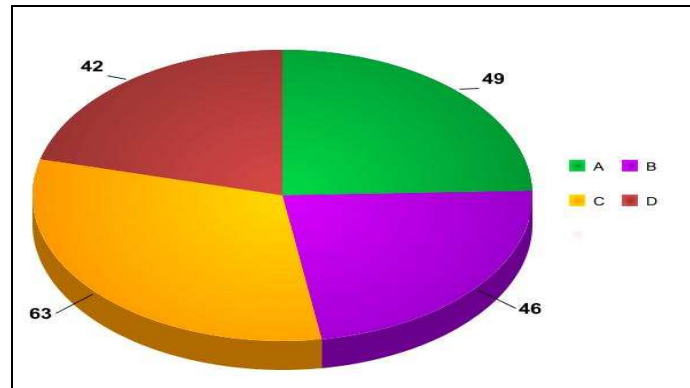


Figure 4 : Question 2

From this question we can see option B and C comprises 54% of the sample group who are involved in economic activities whereas 21% is studying and another 25% is jobless. If these 25% can be bought under self-employment via training and micro financing then that would be the best scenario.

Question 3: Your residential status?

- A. Homeowner
- B. Private Tenant
- C. Council Tenant
- D. Homeless

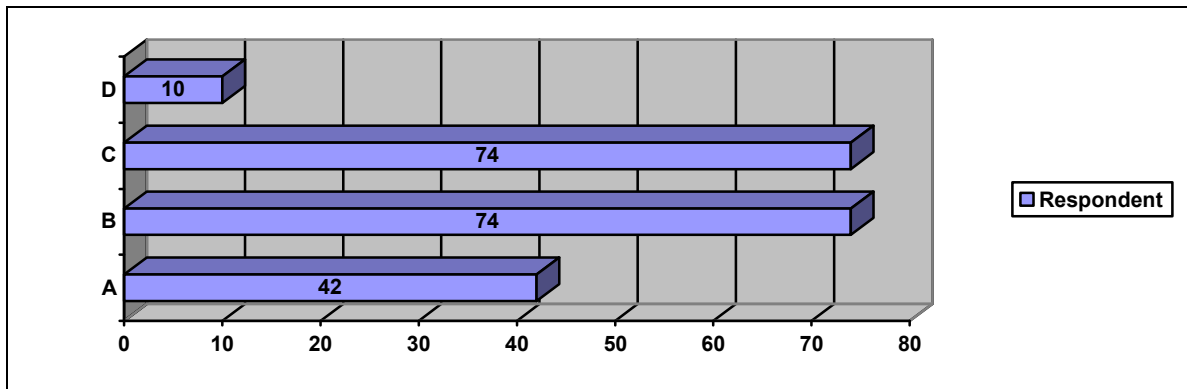


Figure 5: Question 3

From this we can see only 5% is homeless other than that 21% is homeowner as per question 2, 25% (i.e. 42 people) is jobless so either they fall under the homeless group or council tenants. So they are living on benefits.

Question 4: Have you ever approached any financial institute for business finance?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Their response regarding this question is given below with graphical interpretation:

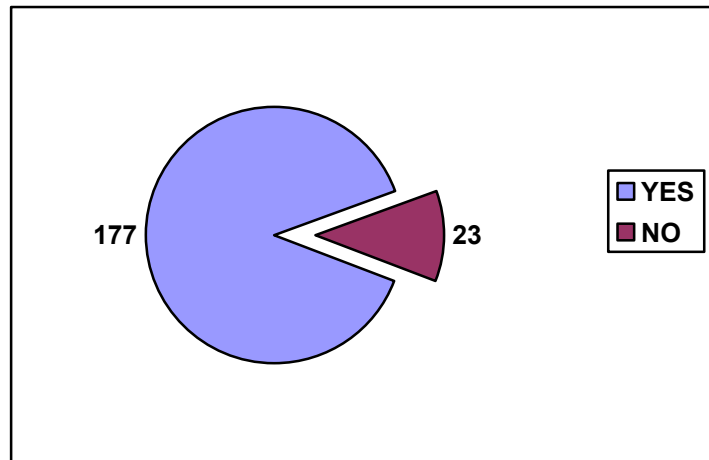


Figure 6 : Question 4

From this we can see that most of the people have approached to financial institutes for finance. The rest 11.5% never approached to any financial institutes. The reason might be fear of getting refused or lack of business skills and training.

Question 5: Were you successful to get the finance?

- A. Yes
- B. No

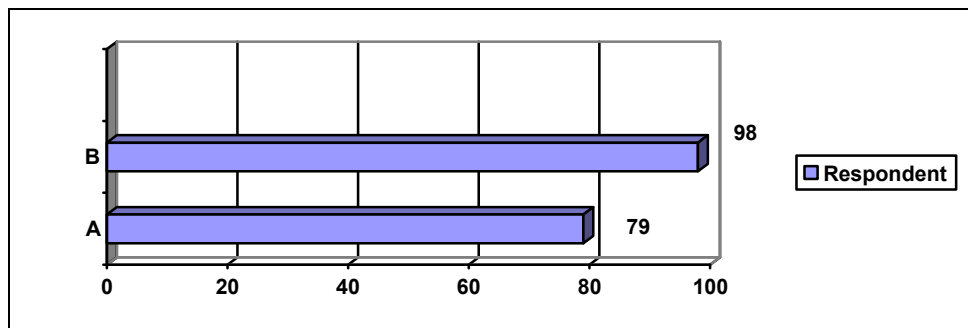


Figure 7 : Question 5

It shows that regardless of willingness it's tough to get loan from banks or building societies. 55.37 % of the respondents were refused for financial assistance. It proves there are still administrative barriers to provide micro loans to individuals. And yet tough they had a business plan they were refused to get help.

Question 6: Were your interest rate alarmingly high?

- A. Yes
- B. No

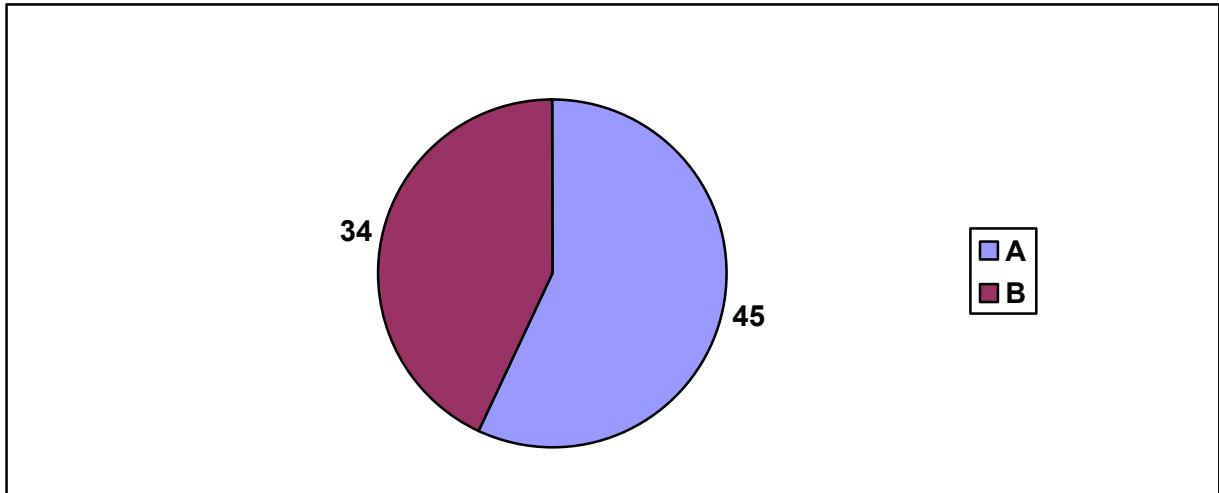


Figure 8 : Question 6

Tough the interest rate for SMEs are getting lower these days but still the survey find outs 56.9% thought their interest rate was alarming. It depends on their circumstances and nature of business and money generating ways. 43.1% said the interest rate was okay that is a good sign.

Question 7: Was there provision of alternate repayment options?

- A. Yes
- B. No

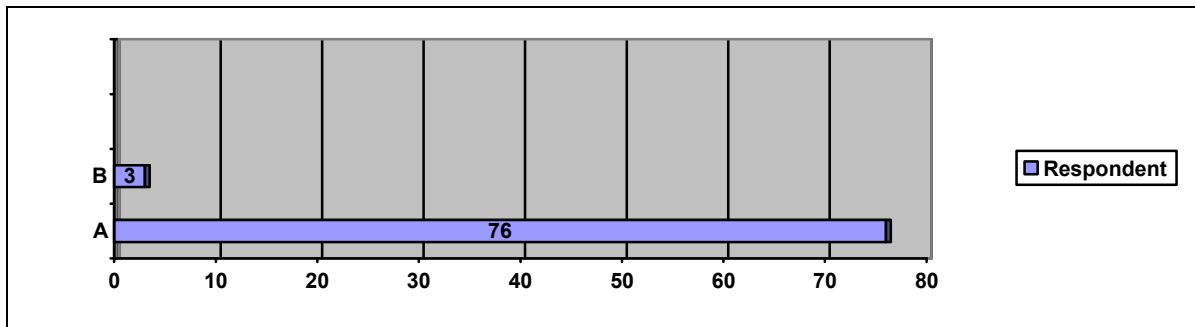


Figure 9: Question 7

This is indeed a very good response. It proves in the UK the framework to implement successful micro financing is already present. The only 3.79% said they did not ha any repayment options. It might have been because of 3rd party lenders.

Question 8: What was the outcome of the financing?

- A. Spent for personal needs
- B. Invested in business

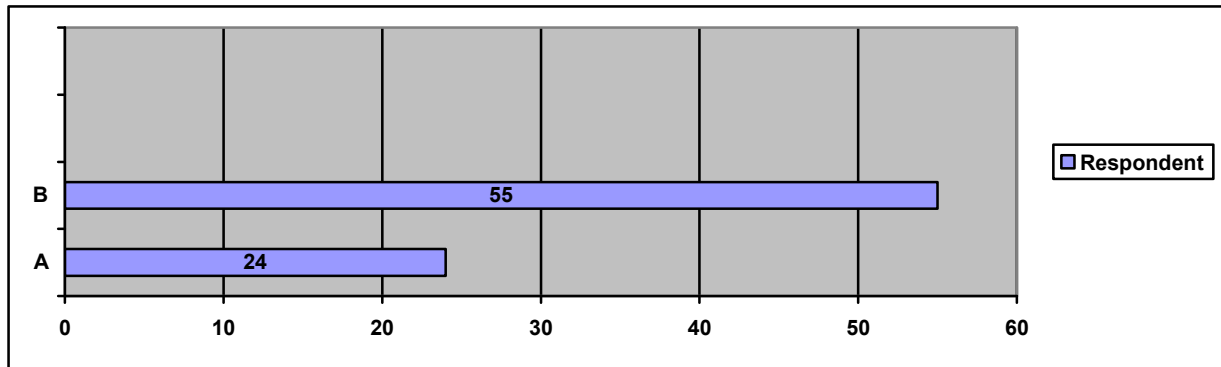


Figure 10: Question 8

So despite having a solid business plan 30.37% wasted the money for their personal needs. This makes it tougher for them to get the monetary support again. Rest 69.63% were able to use the money on their business.

Question 9: What's the status of your business?

- A. Running with no profit-no loss.
- B. Running and generating profit.
- C. Closed down within the first year.

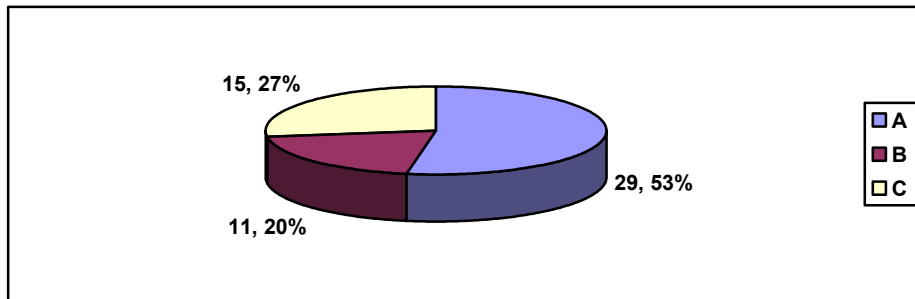


Figure 11 : Question 9

A significant percentage of people that is 53% are holding the business because they prefer to be self employed. 20% of them are running with profit which is definitely praiseworthy and the rest 27% who were closed down in first year might lost it because of lack of training and market knowledge or higher interest rate to be paid to the lender.

Question 10: Do you have any innovative idea that might turn into successful business?

- A. No idea.
- B. I think so.

C. Yes definitely, but can't get finance.

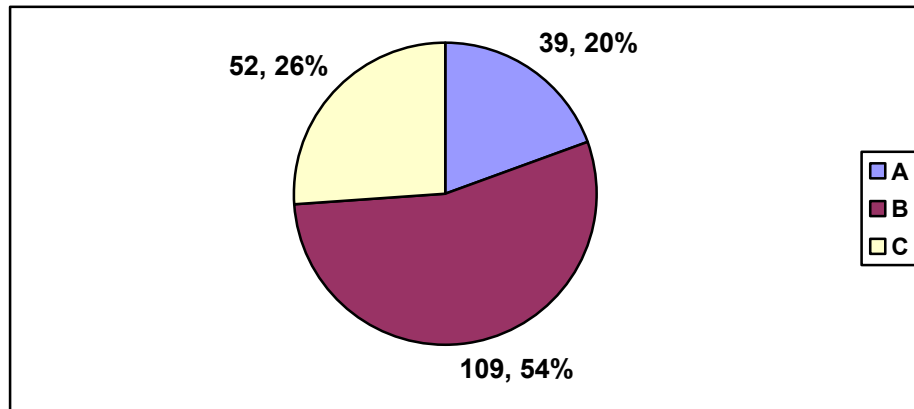


Figure 12 : Question 10

From the above pie chart it is clear that 80% people have some business ideas. So probably they will need more training and money to get started. 20% of the respondent didn't comment.

Question 11: If you are offered financial assistance will you take it and start working on your business idea to make it a reality?

- A. Yes of course.
- B. Depends on circumstances.
- C. No, I had enough experiences.

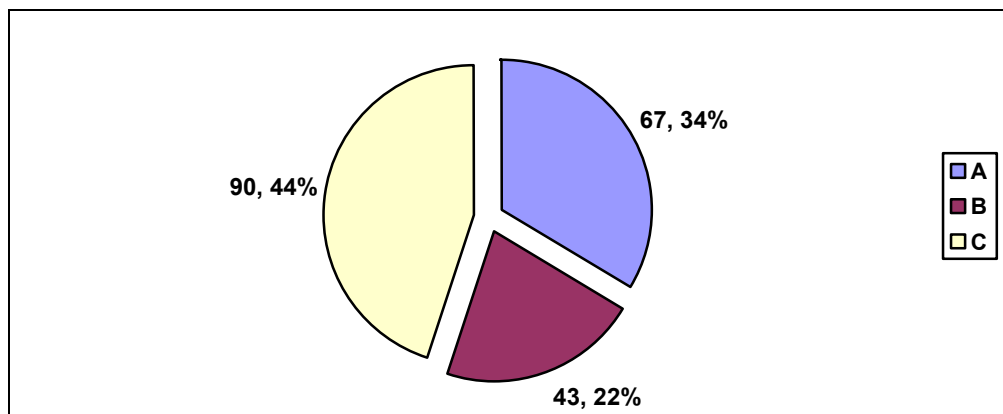


Figure 13: Question 11

Question 12: What is your thought on micro-credit (small loans)?

- A. Great, encouraging.
- B. Good for starters.
- C. Just another financial trap.

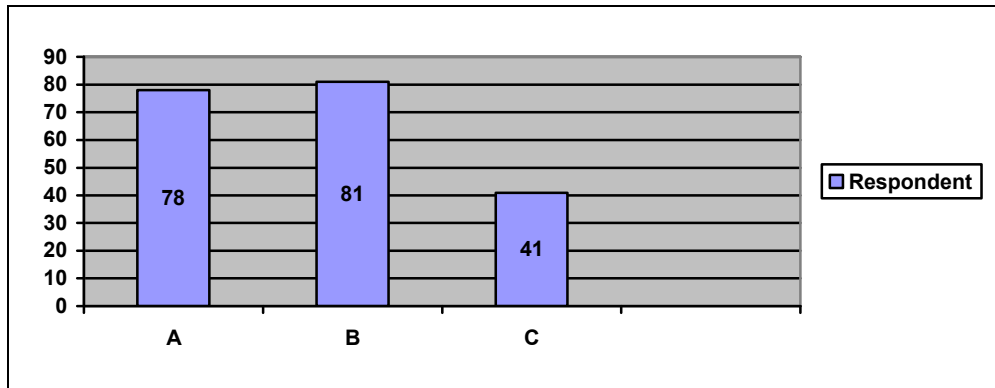


Figure 14: Question 12

From the responses it's evident that most of the respondents have positive thought about micro financing. The critiques are probably the ones who got refused or being given a loan at higher interest rate.

Question 13: Comment on the activities of financing institutes (Banks, CDFIs, MFIs etc.)?

- A. Providing helpful advices and real chances to get started.
- B. Somewhat discouraging with their high interest rates.
- C. Limited packages.

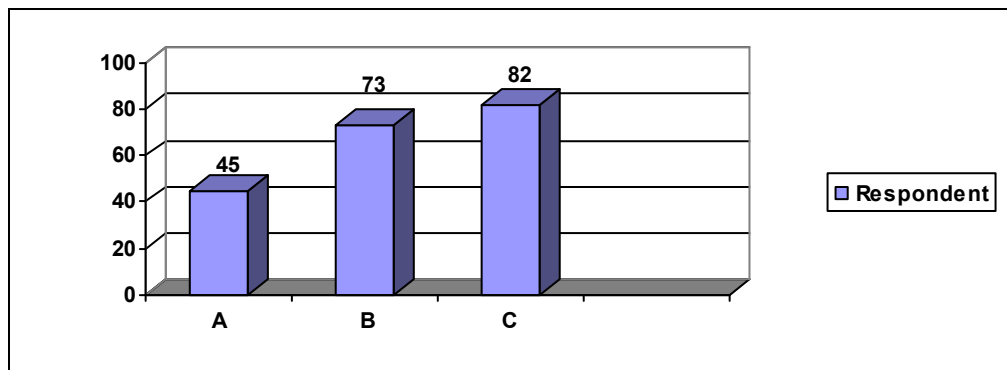


Figure 15: Question no 13

It can be seen from the answers that micro-financing institutes should offer more packages at a significantly lower rate to the credit unworthy people so that they can participate. Also providing advices and training should also be kept in mind.

7.2 Financial Institutes Survey

The data from second survey that dealt with various financing institutes is given below:

Question 1: Type of institution?

- A. Bank/Building society
- B. Credit Union
- C. Micro-financing institution
- D. CDFI
- E. Other

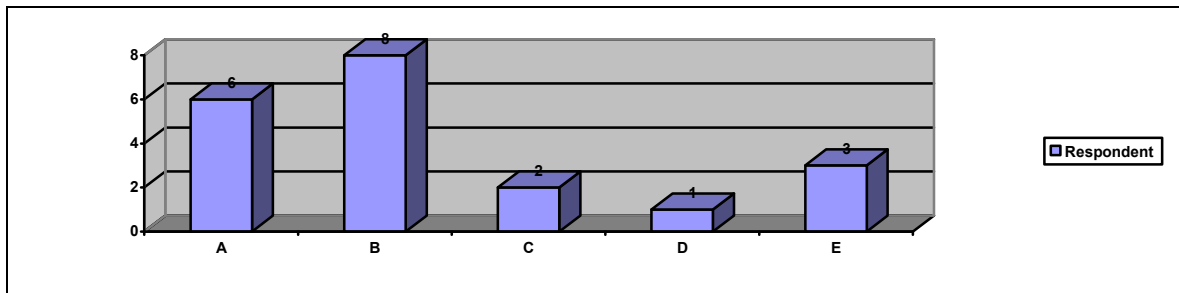


Figure 16: Question 1 [Financial Institute]

The above bar graph represents the number of different institutes participated in the survey. Bank and credit unions leads the stats here.

Question 2: Do you have separate micro financing packages?

- A) Yes
- B) No

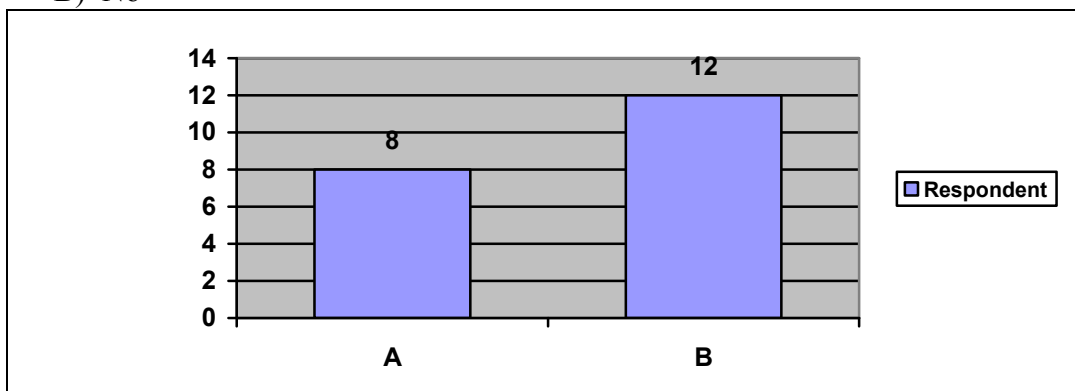


Figure 17 : Question 2

We can see most of the approached financial institutes do not have separate micro-credit packages which is very important to reach to the target mass.

Question 3: Which age group comes most for business loan?

- A. >16 and <30
- B. >30 and <50
- C. 50+

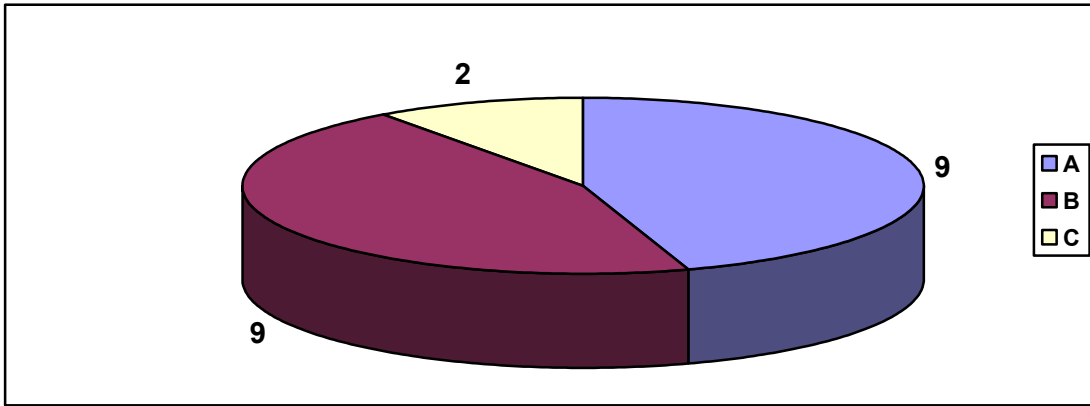


Figure 18: Question 3

So mostly people from 16-50 comes for business loans to the financial institutes. So it means they are atleast aware of the micro-financing.

Question 4: What is the possibility of credit unworthy people getting traditional credits?

- A. Very Unlikely
- B. Possible with guarantor

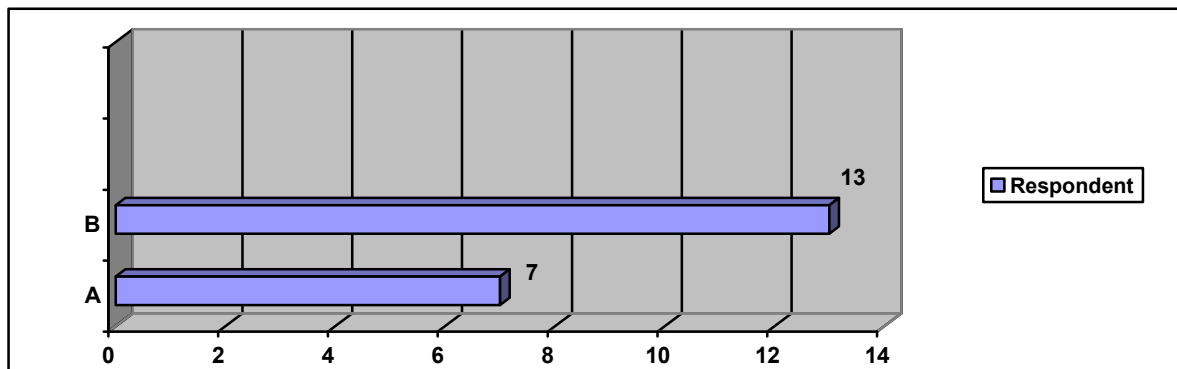


Figure 19: Question 4

As we know micro-credit is for those who lack deposit so from this question response we can say traditional banking is likely to refuse credit. 65% agrees that they might get the assistance if they can provide guarantor.

Question 5: What is the success rate of the micro loan facilities you provide?

- A. 91%+
- B. 70%-90%
- C. 40%-69%
- D. 0-39%

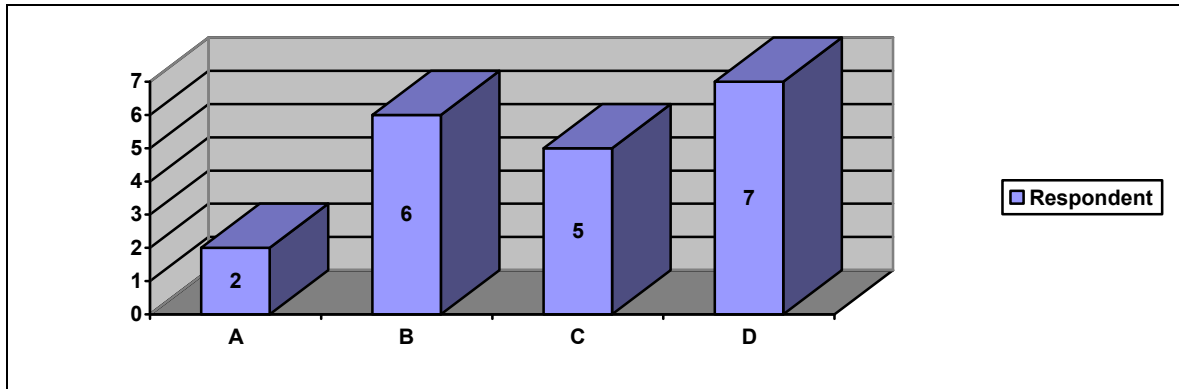


Figure 20: Question 6

We can see success rate with on or above 70% has got highest entries. This is a good sign. This means the loans are getting recycled.

Question 6: What's your comment on loan recycling?

- A) The loans completely get recycled.
- B) A portion of the loans gets recycled.

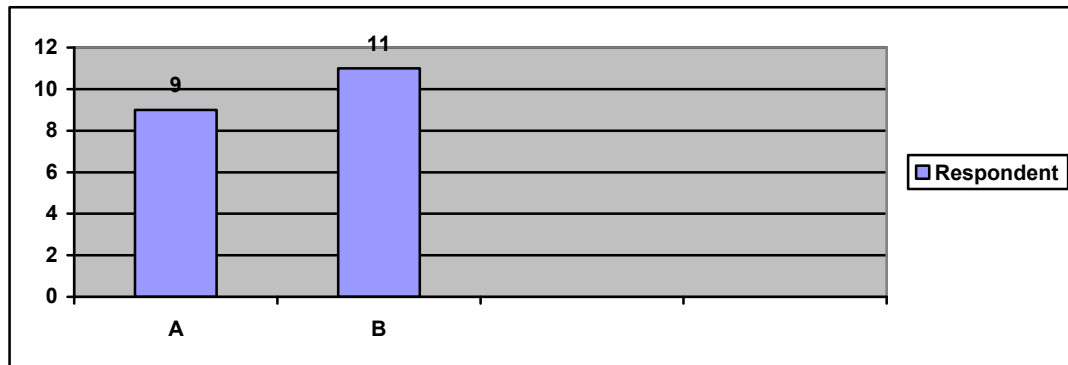


Figure 21: Question 7

If the loan gets completely recycled then it will be a sustainable solution. 45% respondent said the loans are getting recycled. But, still majority 55% of the financial organization is struggling to recycle the full amount of loan.

Question 7: After finishing a scheme do your clients become eligible for better funding?

- A. Yes, straight away.
- B. No, it will depend on client's recent circumstances.

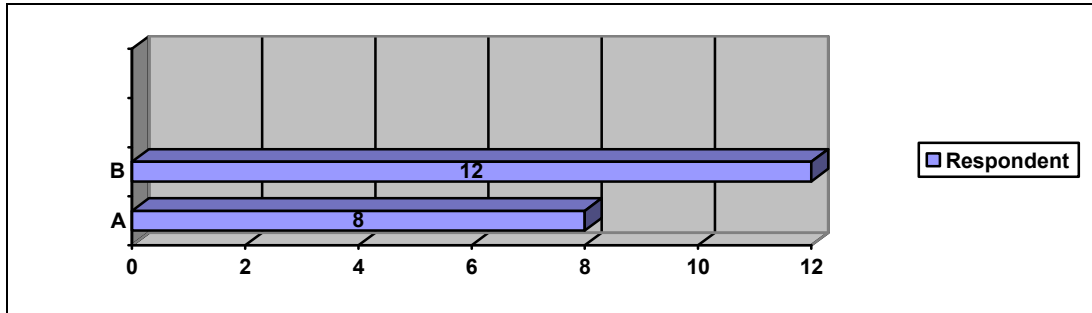


Figure 22: Question 7

This is not a good indicator. Every institution should try to bridge the gap between micro to mainstream financial services. Only 40% of the consumers can have a change extend further financial services without any hassle. Rest have to go through the same process.

Question 8: Do you provide customers with planning and training on proper use of the fund?

- A. Yes, always.
- B. Yes, if they ask.

C. No

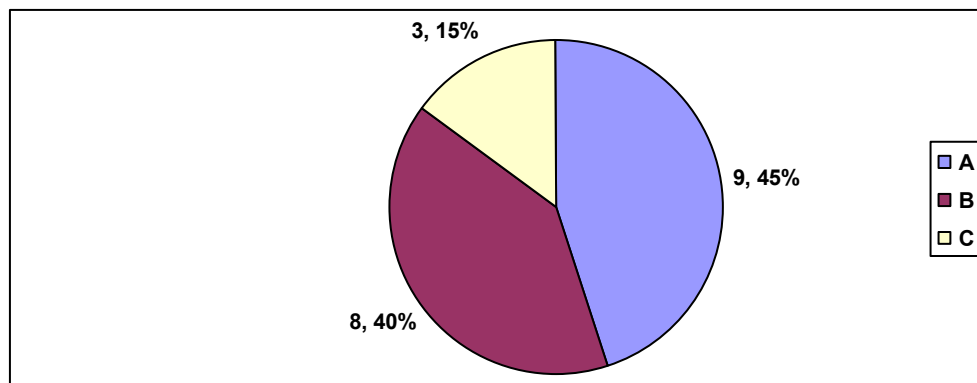


Figure 23: Question 8

It is good that 85% of the financing institutes provide assistance with loan. Only 15% does not provide any help. If adequate assistance is not provided it is likely that new businesses will face the hardship to get a stable start. To ensure the money is being better utilized every institute should do this.

Question 9: Does your institute tries to differentiate between ‘poorest of the poor’ and ‘poor’ in times of loan decision?

- A. No such infrastructure.
- B. Yes, in several cases.

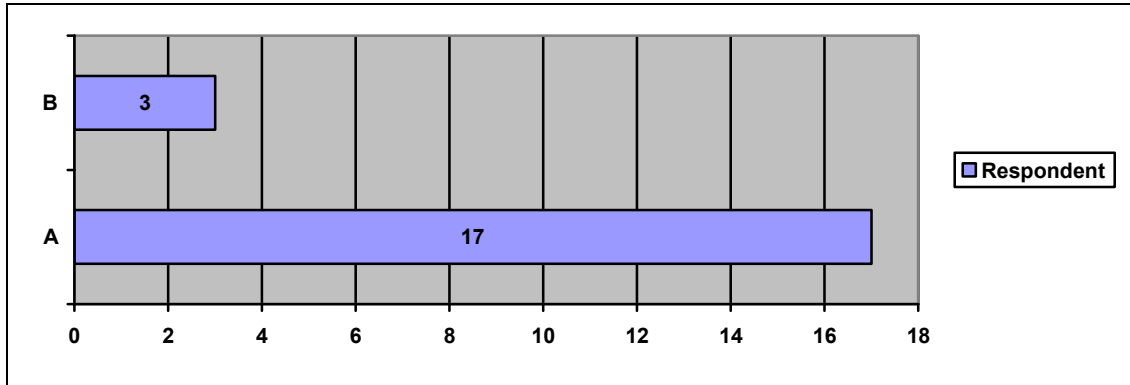


Figure 24: Question 9

This is a very interesting point. Though the banks or other financial institutes do offer micro loans but 85% does not possess infrastructure to differentiate between the poor and the poorest.

Question 10: Sustainable social development through micro-finance is possible– Do you agree?

- A) Yes, with precise framework and govt. policy.
- B) Yes, to some extent it might help the society.
- C) No, micro-financing is not the solution.

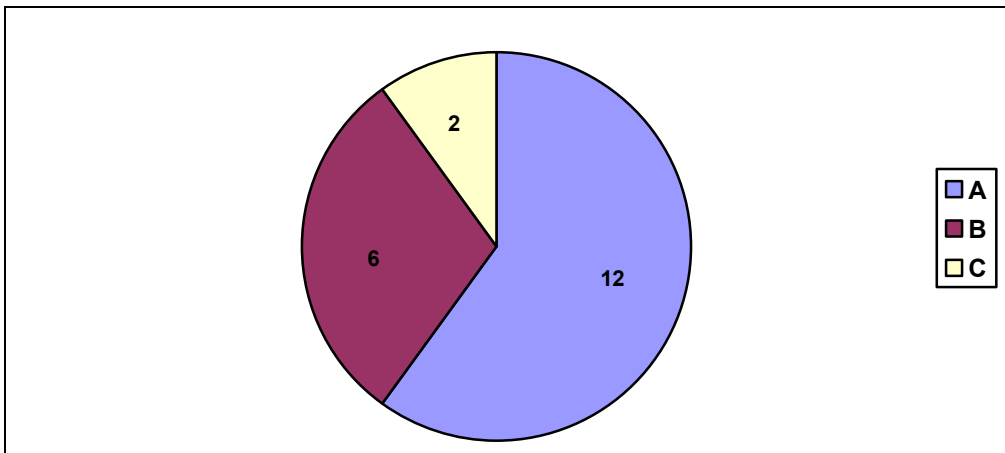


Figure 25: Question 10

So according to majority, micro-credit driven financing can help society to gain sustainable development. But for that necessary frameworks and policies should be reviewed.

6. Recommendations:

Throughout the carried research it has been found out that the UK possesses an excellent environment to support micro lending activities. A few revisions in the policies will speed up the whole micro-financing process to a large extent. Some of main ones are listed below:

- 1) Policies supporting self employment for jobless as a substitute for waged employment should be deployed by Labor ministries and employment agencies.
- 2) Micro financed customers form a new arena of possible consumers of different products of traditional Banks. The communication gap between traditional banks and micro financing banks should be reduced to facilitate a smooth transition for the consumers who will move from micro finance to mainstream economy.
- 3) Partially self financed self-employment as an start for jobless people bight help the society to get motivated. To do this the social welfare organizations can play a vital part.
- 4) MFIs/Finance support organizations should conduct various programs to reach to the target mass. Focusing on target mass will potentially reduce number of defaulters.

6.1 Policy measures that foster entrepreneurship

Encouraging entrepreneurship is a tough task. Starting from scratch and then reaching to the goal needs a lot of hard labor and adequate knowledge and training related to the work. To foster entrepreneurship these policies might help:

- 1) Introduce awareness programmes to let people know about the positive sides of self-employment and entrepreneurship in educational institutes and recruitment agencies.
- 2) Reduce legal and admin barriers to favor micro-enterprises. For example: tax holiday and easy business registration.
- 3) One-stop, temporary assistance for creation of micro-enterprises.

6.2 Policy measures to promote micro-enterprise support organisations

- 1) Mentoring, training etc. supportive programmes for non-financial services.
- 2) Tax incentives and waivers for micro-enterprise support organizations.
- 3) Subsidize interest rate and also subsidize funding for MFIs to cover related costs. By the time the industry gets competitive they might charge a small amount of fee per loan.
- 4) Form trade association to help micro-enterprise support organizations.

6.3 Policy measures that strengthen links between potential self-employed people and micro-enterprise support agencies

- 1) Provide clear and precise information to potential micro-entrepreneurs through appropriate channels (internet, telephone etc.).
- 2) Classify clear-cut referral systems for potential micro-entrepreneurs.
- 3) Maintain documentation and employ appraisal methods for successful client identification.

6.4 Policy measures that reduce the barriers between social system and employment/enterprise system

- 1) Monitor closely the individual who moves from benefits to self-employment for that establish alliance between social welfare system and enterprises.
- 2) Different sources of income should have smooth transition between both the systems.
- 3) Provide incentives for self-employment via active labour market policy.
- 4) Train staffs at employee bureau to offer self employment as an identical alternative for waged employment.
- 5) Introduce financial and business courses to social welfare workers.

6.5 Policy measures that encourage unemployed to become self-employed

- 1) Research should be carried out constantly to measure roots of social exclusion and poverty also their possibilities to become self-employed.
- 2) Barriers to social participation should be addressed by the programs that assist people at-risk of poverty.
- 3) Income generating capability should be tested by the income bridges.
- 4) Like waged employment, in-work benefits should be offered for self-employment
- 5) Like waged employment same opportunities should be offered for self employment.

6.6 Policy to strengthen legal and regulatory framework for micro-finance

- 1) Micro lending should be regulated by specific legislation so that they do not get involved in unfair competition with mainstream financial institutions.
- 2) Reduce capital requirements for micro-credit institutions.
- 3) Favor micro-credit institutions through tax waivers or incentives.
- 4) Ease opportunities to catch the attention of commercial sources for micro-lending.
- 5) Sufficient protective private law to avoid indebtedness.

6.7 Policy measures that strengthen links between micro-finance organisation and banks

- 1) Application of risk sharing loan instruments thus banks can analysis credit worthiness of self employed client.
- 2) Tax incentive options for banks supplying funds to micro-credit retailers.
- 3) Outsource loan transaction documentation like business plan preparation and analysis, credit analysis to micro-enterprise support organizations.
- 4) Sharing of office place.
- 5) Cross-selling of services.

6.8 Policy measures that promote diversified funding instruments for micro-enterprises

- 1) Tax benefit for starters.
- 2) Business support providers should get tax benefit.
- 3) Favorable tax rule for donors.
- 4) Promote risk capital instruments to starters.

6.9 Policy measures that strengthen partnerships between micro-enterprise support organisations

- 1) Conduct research to advice how governments can assist micro enterprises to strengthen efficiency and effectiveness.
- 2) Exchange of information between different agencies related to micro funding.
- 3) Use of client referral for more target able consumer.

7. Summery and Conclusion:

During the research, it has being found out that in the UK micro financing is already getting promoted. The 2010 financial budget of the UK has given SMEs a lot of flexible opportunity to grow by allocating £15bn more public sector contracts to SME sector. This research work also figured out the possible integrations of micro credit driven activities to the traditional economy. The roles of banks, building societies, CDFIs, MFIs are being reviewed. The most important thing will be to give various incentives for the starters so that they feel motivated. In the current economic situation the UK can not just allow living in benefits which comes from the taxpayer's money as a permanent solution to support the socially excluded. The current system gives a 'National Minimum Wage' it should also have a 'Maximum Income Cap' for different job sectors so that everybody gets equal chance to use their ability to earn. The transition from the existing benefit system to self employment will definitely need time. During this period the micro financing institutes should come forward to raise the awareness about being self employed along with providing ample training sessions so that people know how to be money-wise before going into any endeavors.

A number of recommendations have been added which will add significant pace in involving micro financing options throughout the UK. To make something new to work perfectly it is evident to have a robust legal framework. The target population in the UK should be addressed with various micro budgeting projects that will give them the option to choose the one they really want to go for. The interest rate of the loans are getting lower that is a good sign but after providing loan the institutes should keep on monitoring the progress so that when in need they can get help from their lenders also the lender might provide financial training to the small business starters so that they can avoid the difficulties faced while doing the deployment. That will be a great addition to the traditional loan scheme.

To conclude with, micro-credit has enormous possibilities in the UK. More awareness about using innovative ideas with small amount of financial help from financial institutions across the nation might increase the number of people choosing self employment as an equal opportunity compared to waged employment. That will definitely bring the well cherished change in the society by means of social inclusion and minimizing poverty level.

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Appendix

Questionnaire [For individual]

Note: The survey is for educational purpose. The identity of the surveyed will never be disclosed.

Put ✓ mark on the most appropriate answer.

Question 1: Which Age group do you belong to?

- 0-16
- 17-30
- 31-50
- 50-70
- 70+

Question 2: Your occupational status?

- Student
- Self employed
- Working either as private or govt. employee
- Jobless

Question 3: Your residential status?

- Homeowner
- Private Tenant
- Council Tenant
- Homeless

Question 3: Have you ever approached any financial institute for business finance?

- Yes
- No [Please go to question no 8]

Question 4: Were you successful to get the finance?

- Yes
- No [Please go to question no 8]

Question 5: Were your interest rate alarmingly high?

- Yes
- No

Question 5: Was there provision of alternate repayment options?

- Yes
- No

Question 6: What was the outcome of the financing?

- Spent for personal needs [Please go to question no 8]
- Invested in business

Question 7: What's the status of your business?

- Running with no profit-no loss.
- Running and generating profit.
- Closed down within the first year.

Question 8: Do you have any innovative idea that might turn into successful business?

- No idea.
- I think so.
- Yes definitely, but can't get finance.

Question 9: If you are offered financial assistance will you take it and start working on your business idea to make it a reality?

- Yes of course.
- Depends on circumstances.
- No, I had enough experiences.

Question 10: What is your thought on micro-credit (small loans)?

- Great, encouraging.
- Good for starters.
- Just another financial trap.

Question 11: Comment on the activities of financing institutes (Banks, CDFIs, MFIs etc.)?

- Providing helpful advices and real chances to get started.
- Somewhat discouraging with their high interest rates.
- Limited packages.

Questionnaire [For Financial Institutes]

Note: The survey is for educational purpose. The identity of the surveyed will never be disclosed.

Put ✓ mark on the most appropriate answer.

Question 1: Type of institution?

- Bank/Building society
- Credit Union
- Micro-financing institution
- CDFI
- Other

Question 2: Do you have separate micro financing packages?

- Yes
- No

Question 3: Which age group comes most for business loan?

- >16 and <30
- >30 and <50
- 50+

Question 4: What is the possibility of credit unworthy people getting traditional credits?

- Very Unlikely
- Possible with guarantor

Question 5: What is the success rate of the micro loan facilities you provide?

- 91%+
- 80%-90%
- 50%-79%
- 0-49%

Question 6: What's your comment on loan recycling?

- The loans completely get recycled.
- A portion of the loans gets recycled.

Question 7: After finishing a scheme do your clients become eligible for better funding?

- Yes, straight away.
- No, it will depend on client's recent circumstances.

Question 8: Do you provide customers with planning and guidance about proper use of the fund?

- Yes, always.
- Yes, if they ask.
- No

Question 9: Does your institute tries to differentiate between 'poorest of the poor' and 'poor' in times of loan decision?

- No such infrastructure.
- Yes, in several cases.

Question 10: Sustainable social development through micro-finance is possible– Do you agree?

- Yes, with precise framework and govt. policy.
- Yes, to some extent it might help the society.
- No, micro-financing is not the solution.