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INVESTIGATING THE GAP IN KUR ACCESS FOR MICRO AND SMALL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract
This study looks at the problems that micro and small businesses (MSEs) face in Depok, Indonesia, when trying to get into the Kredit Usaha Rakyat (KUR) program. It also looks at how these problems resulted in reducing poverty and improving income distribution. The study uses an experimental design to analyze the determinant of financial access, such as how well MSEs understand KUR, financial report, the age of the business, and technological adoption. There were 147 MSEs in total, splitted into treatment and control groups. The treatment group got help through FGDs. The data collection was executed both before and after the intervention to see how it affected access to KUR. The results show that the treatment group had much better access to KUR, especially when it came to understanding KUR processes better and having much better financial reporting skills. The findings indicate that the integration of digital tools into marketing strategies significantly enhances individuals' ability to secure funding. Statistical analysis through regression reveals that awareness of government credit programs such as KUR and the capability to manage financial documentation play crucial roles in improving financial access. Conversely, how long a business has been operating appears to have only a minimal impact. Notably, there was little to no improvement in KUR access among participants who did not receive the intervention, highlighting the effectiveness of targeted support measures. Overall, the study emphasizes that well-planned initiatives such as focus group discussions can empower micro and small enterprises to obtain additional financing, which is vital for poverty alleviation and fostering inclusive economic progress. These outcomes reinforce the critical need for continuous training and advisory services tailored to the needs of small businesses.

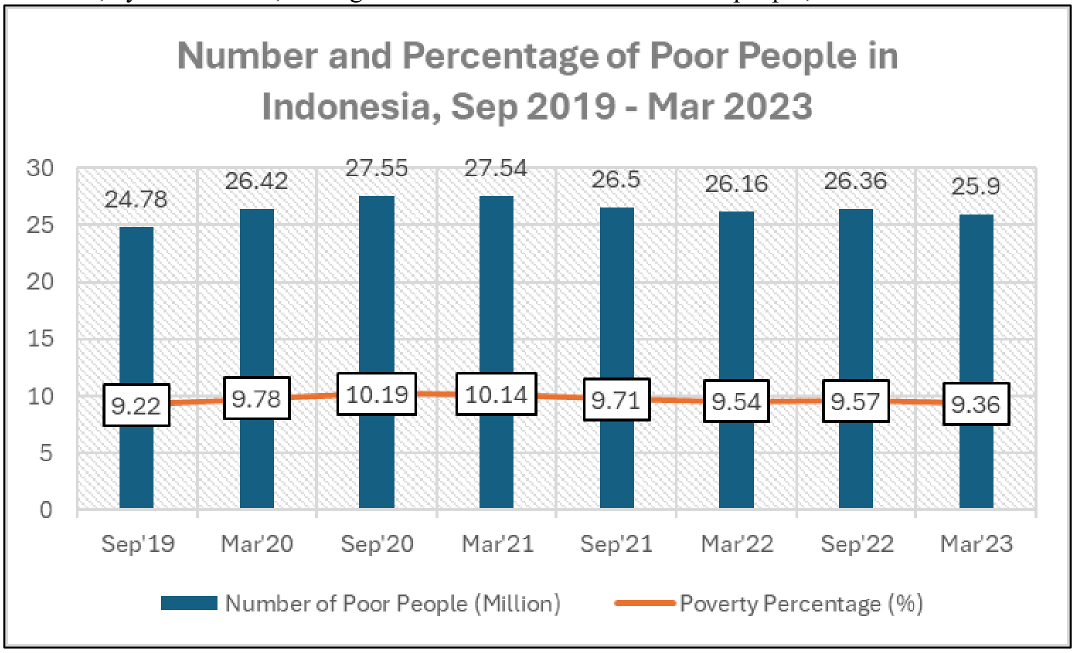
Keywords: MSEs, Financial Access; KUR; Poverty Gap: Experimental Design

INTRODUCTION

The National Long-Term Development Plan for 2025–2045 was made by the Ministry of PPN to help make the Golden Indonesia Vision 2045 a reality. This vision sees Indonesia as a self-governing, modern, and long-lasting group of islands. The main goals of this plan are: By 2045, Indonesia's per capita income is expected to be similar to that of developed countries. Poverty levels are expected to drop a lot, and inequality is expected to drop as well, with the Gini ratio estimated to be between 0.290 and 0.320. Also, it is expected that Eastern Indonesia's share of the national economy (GRDP) will reach 28.5%. Indonesia wants to be in the top 15 countries on the Global Power Index. It also wants to improve the competitiveness of its people, with a Human Capital Index goal of 0.73. Indonesia is working hard to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions. As part of its plan to reach net zero emissions, it wants to cut down (Bappenas, 2022).

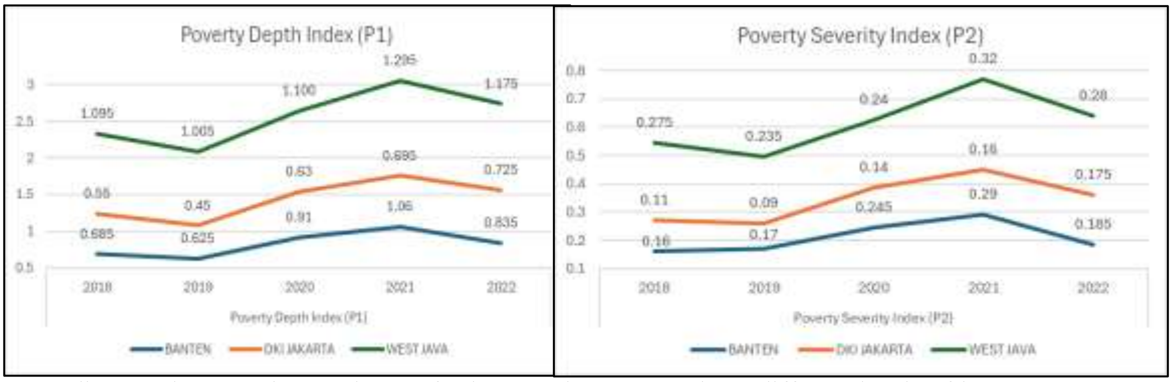
The goal in fighting poverty is to help people who can't meet the living standards of their community and can't reach their full physical, mental, and intellectual potential. Making it easier for people to get to schools, hospitals, and transportation systems is a good way to fight poverty. The American Episcopal Conference (Garneau, 2001) says that there are three main ways to look at poverty: (1) Real poverty comes from unfairness, manipulation, and violence; (2) poverty comes from being treated like an object, which takes away your right to live and your freedom to make choices; and (3) spiritual poverty means losing your sense of spiritual awareness and connection with others, especially those who are poor and need help and freedom.

The SDGs represent a shared global commitment by nations at all levels of development to enhance the quality of life for people everywhere. It makes it clear that there is an urgent need for action around the world to protect the planet. The private sector is an important stakeholder that can help speed up the implementation of the SDGs (Rashed & Shah, 2021). In September 2019, approximately 24.78 million individuals in Indonesia, or 9.22% of the population, were classified as living in poverty marking the lowest poverty rate since 2014 and aligning with the goal of the 2030 SGDs, which focuses on eradicating poverty. However, by March 2021, this figure had increased to 27.54 million people, or 10.14%.



Source: BPS, 2023
Figure 1: Number and Percentage of Poor People, September 2019-March 2023

Figure 1 there were 25.90 million poor people in March 2023. This is a drop of 0.46 million from September 2022 and 0.26 million from March 2022. In March 2023, the poverty rate was 9.36%. This was down 0.21% from September 2022 and 0.18% from March 2022. From 2018 to 2021, the provinces of Banten, DKI Jakarta, and West Java saw a decrease in both the depth and severity of poverty. But in 2022, the index went up in some provinces. This means that the income of the poor has gone up a little, even though they are still below the poverty line. DKI Jakarta is the capital city and a buffer zone, and there are differences in how income is spread out there.



According to Figure 2, the provinces of Jakarta and West Java have different levels of income. Banten province is similar to Jakarta province because they are next to each other and a lot of people move from Banten to Jakarta. The government has consistently pursued poverty reduction since 1983 through deregulation, structural adjustments, and economic restructuring. Deregulation in trade and investment has not helped small and micro businesses; instead, it has mostly helped big companies and conglomerates. Research shows that small, medium, and large businesses do not add value; instead, conglomerate-scale companies with more than 1,000 employees do (Gandhi et al., 2021).

Micro and small businesses (MSEs) still face a number of problems that make it hard for them to grow quickly. These include problems with getting into new markets, problems with improving and growing their businesses, and problems with getting loans from banks. Micro and small businesses, which mostly work in the informal sector, have a hard time getting bank loans. One reason is that banks have strict rules that micro and small business owners often can't meet, especially when it comes to collateral. In 2018, 19.9% of credit went to MSEs (Setyawati, 2009).

The theory of economic accessibility looks at how both economic and non-economic factors affect people's and groups' ability to get money and opportunities. It is very important to be able to get credit, and problems with the process can slow down progress for people or businesses (Ghosh & Shrestha, 2020). This theory is helpful for MSEs and the KUR program because it helps to find and understand the different problems that MSEs face that stop them from fully using the program (Huston, 2010).

The theory of economic opportunity and entrepreneurship driving the development and long-term sustainability of MSEs, particularly in the context of accessing government-supported financing programs such as KUR because it looks at how people and groups look for and use economic opportunities to start businesses and encourage new ideas. This theory looks at how having access to time and money affects the success of a business (Alvares & Barney, 2020).

Risk management theory plays a crucial role in supporting MSEs and the implementation of the KUR program because it helps people, businesses, and organizations find, assess, and reduce risks that could be bad for them. In managing a business and securing credit, understanding the impact of risk on decision-making and identifying strategies to mitigate those risks are essential for long-term success and financial stability (Mashiri, 2022).

Their related theories are crucial in understanding the requirements MSEs must meet to access the KUR program, particularly in the broader context of reducing poverty and promoting income equality. By gaining insight into these theoretical frameworks, MSEs can better identify, assess, and respond to the risks associated with participating in credit schemes like KUR. This knowledge also equips them to develop more effective business strategies, enhance their entrepreneurial skills, and optimize the use of their existing resources to maximize the benefits of such government-supported initiatives.

Launched in November 2007, the KUR program marked the government's initial effort to support MSEs. The government's emphasis on supporting MSEs stems from their potential to absorb large numbers of workers, especially when they utilize local natural resources. As a result, strengthening MSEs is expected to contribute significantly to job creation, poverty alleviation, equitable income distribution, and the advancement of rural economies (Nazroi et al., 2022). Overall, the KUR program is designed to stimulate economic activity in the real sector with the overarching goals of reducing poverty and expanding employment opportunities (Djufri et al., 2021).

The objective of this study is to find out what problems MSEs have when trying to get into the KUR program. This study also aim to improve the KUR program for MSEs so that it can help reduce poverty. So, thfind and create policy options that make it easier for MSEs to get to the KUR program, which will help them make a bigger impact on efforts to reduce poverty. The government is expected to include the growth of micro and small businesses (MSEs) in its policies to speed up development and reduce poverty. This will also be a focus of global research efforts. Sustainable Development Goals are promises made by countries and the world to improve the well-being of people (Biermann et al., 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses field research and experimental design to gather data. Field research includes giving out questionnaires and doing interviews (Setyawati & Suroso, 2017). Experimental design, on the other hand, lets researchers control all the outside factors that affect the experiment, which gives it high internal validity (Haaland, 2020). Primary data was gathered through fieldwork in the Depok area of West Java, which included in-depth interviews with MSE owners, bank representatives, and government officials. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected through a comprehensive review of existing literature and relevant documents.

Purposive sampling was used to determine the sample and respondent distribution in Depok, West Java. To make it easier to tabulate, process, and analyze the data that has been collected, a data collection tool is needed. This tool will include a questionnaire for local government officials to find out how well the program is being carried out, how skilled and committed local government officials are, how focused they are, what policies are in place to empower MSEs, and what the main reasons are for MSE empowerment implementation in Depok, West Java. The questionnaire will be sent developing cooperatives and MSEs, as well as to representatives from the Regional Head and local staff members of the agency that oversees the development of cooperatives and MSEs.

This study uses an experimental design that makes it easier to help MSEs in Depok through FGDs. This study influence of several factors on MSEs access to financing, including the age of the business, their knowledge of the KUR program, the quality of their financial records, and the use of digital marketing tools. To support the improvement of participants' knowledge and skills, group discussion sessions were conducted as a form of intervention, offering targeted information and hands-on guidance. The study was structured by categorizing MSE participants into two distinct groups: one group benefited from focused facilitation through these sessions, while the other group received no similar support. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention, data were gathered at two points prior to and following the program to observe shifts in their ability to access financial resources.

Table 2 Distribution of MSE Respondents in Depok, West Java

Data Source	Number of People
Treatment Group	27
Control group	120
Implementing Bank	9
Guarantor Institution	9
Related services	7
MFI/KSP	9
Total	136

Source: Primary Data

Based on what has been seen in the field, the treatment and control groups are chosen so that the reasons given later are taken into account.

1. Limited Resources:

● Level of Intervention: Providing help through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) requires a lot of resources, such as time, knowledge, and money for running the groups. As a result, the number of MSEs included in the treatment group was intentionally limited. Including too many participants in focus group discussions can reduce the effectiveness of both the discussions and the mentoring process, making it harder to provide meaningful support to each participant. Interactions are more detailed and focused in smaller groups.

2. Availability and Suitability of Participants:

● Criteria for Selection: A total of 26 MSEs met the requirements for intervention, such as being ready, having special needs, and being willing to participate fully. The treatment group was required to complete a more demanding set of activities, which naturally limited participation to those who were genuinely prepared and committed.

3. Experimental Research Design:

● Exploratory or Pilot Studies: These initial stages are designed to assess the effectiveness of an intervention. Starting with a smaller treatment group is appropriate, with the possibility of expanding the group size in subsequent phases. Researchers can focus on collecting in-depth, high-quality data when treatment groups are smaller, which improves the quality of the data.

Questionnaires are used to find out how well empowerment programs are working and what factors are affecting MSE empowerment in different areas. The questionnaire is meant for cooperative managers and business owners who are working on projects to give more power to local governments. MSE actors, cooperatives, agencies, microfinance institutions, and experts were all there.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis methods are used to find out what makes it easier or harder to get financing, like KUR. There are two ways to do qualitative research: directly and indirectly. To enhance the analysis and identify the factors influencing MSEs access to loans particularly through the KUR program an empirical model is applied. The study utilizes the OLS method for its statistical analysis (Setyawati, 2017). This study looks at how a mentoring workshop affected MSEs' ability to get financing by comparing the situation before and after the workshop. The first model looked at the things that affect MSEs' willingness to accept KUR

$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \beta 3X3 + \beta 4X4 + \epsilon$ .... (1a)

Where:

Y : Ease of access to KUR financing

X_1 : MSEs' level of understanding of KUR

X_2 : UMK Age

X_3 : Have financial statements

X_4 : Marketing already uses technology

Equation 1 illustrates the factors that influence the difficulty of obtaining KUR financing. Both the treatment and control groups will estimate Model 1 based on data collected before and after the FGD intervention. This study examines the impact of MSE growth and access, utilizing data from questionnaires alongside macroeconomic data from Depok city. Additional details about the model are provided in Table 3 (Gujarati & Porter, 2010).

Table 2 Model of Income Inequality and Poverty Gap Levels

Variables	Explanation
Poverty gap (Y_1)	Indicates the average income below the poverty line, expressed as a percentage of the poverty line.
Gini coefficient growth (Y_2)	The Gini coefficient measures income inequality as the ratio of the area

	between the Lorenz curves; higher values indicate greater inequality.

Source: (Kanayo et al, 2013)
Where:
X_1 : Total MSEs
X_2: Credit Value of MSEs in Depok City
X_3 : Depok city inflation
X_4 : BI Rate

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There were 147 people from MSEs who took part in the research in Depok City through FGDs. The goal was to get people's thoughts and opinions on the problems that MSEs have when trying to get the KUR program, In order to help reduce poverty and promote fair income distribution. Group discussions often bring up ideas that wouldn't come up in other ways. A questionnaire was sent to MSEs to find out more about sample demographic and their types of business.

Women own most of the micro and small businesses (MSEs) in Depok City, West Java. There are 79 women who own these businesses, which is 54% of the total. This could be because women often start businesses to help their families become financially stable, especially during tough times. Moreover, women tend to have flexible schedules that make it easier to run a business. The government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have put a lot of money into helping women start businesses, which has helped them contribute more to the family economy. Women-owned businesses in Indonesia grow because of social and economic factors (Granata et al., 2018).

There are 65 people, or 44% of the total, who own MSEs in Depok City and are between the ages of 41 and 50. People in this age group usually have a lot of work experience, which helps them get bigger loans for business ventures. They might also look for ways to bring people together through business. Having more social connections and knowing more about the market makes it easier to run a business. Indonesian business owners place strong emphasis on family values and are highly motivated by the aspiration to increase their income (Purnawan et al., 2023). There are 80 people (54% of samples) in Depok City who own MSEs and have at least a diploma or bachelor's degree. College students typically acquire foundational knowledge in areas such as management, accounting, and marketing, which are essential for running a successful business. Additionally, universities and other higher education institutions provide greater access to information, advanced technologies, and valuable professional connections. These resources make it easier for businesses to start and grow. People may be hesitant to start their own businesses if they have a steady job, but after getting a good education, many people realize how important it is to do so (Tambunan, 2019; Parangkulan, 2023).

After the FGD given to MSE in Depok, the results showed that the businesses in the treatment group were able to get KUR financing much more easily. Micro and Small Enterprises that took part in the Focus Group Discussion intervention had a better understanding of the KUR program, such as how to apply and what benefits were available. In addition, they were better at making financial reports and were interested in using technology to market goods.

In contrast, the length of time an MSE has been operating has a minimal impact. These findings highlight the effectiveness of mentoring through focus group discussions in strengthening key factors that enable micro and small enterprises to secure loans, particularly from formal financial institutions. Meanwhile, the control group comprising MSEs that did not participate in FGDs showed little to no improvement in loan accessibility over the study period.

Comparing the control and treatment groups through focus group discussions revealed a clear and significant impact of the intervention. The treatment group experienced substantial progress in key areas, whereas the control group showed little to no improvement. MSEs are unlikely to enhance their access to financing. These results underscore the vital role that mentoring programs play in strengthening the capabilities and skills of MSEs to secure formal financial support.

Treatment Group

Before FGD Assistance:

Estimation result

The Ease of Access to Financing is estimated as follows: 0.75 + 0.18 (Level of Understanding of KUR) + 0.004 (Age of MSEs) + 0.22 (Having Financial Statements) + 0.15 (Marketing Using Technology) + ε_1.

Table 3 Estimation Results Before FGD Assistance

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Value of t	p-value
Intercept (α)	0.75	0.12	6.25	0.001
KUR Understanding Level (β_1)	0.18	0.06	3.00	0.003
Age of MSEs (β_2)	0.004	0.002	2.00	0.048
Having Financial Statements (β_3)	0.22	0.08	2.75	0.007

Marketing with Technology (β_4)	0.15	0.07	2.14	0.035
R^2	0.65			

Source: Researcher estimation results
*Significant at 1%
**Significant at 5%

After FGD Faciitation:
Estimation Result
Ease of Acces to Financing= i.50 + 0.40 (Level of Understanding of KUR) + 0,002 (Age of MSEs) + 0.45 (Having Financial Statements) + 0.35 (Marketing Using Technology) + ε_2

Table 5. Estimation Result After FDG Assistance

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Value of t	p-value
Intercept (α)	1.50	0.10	15.00	0.001
KUR Understanding Level (β_1)	0.40	0.05	8.00	0.001
Age of MSEs (β_2)	0.002	0.001	2.00	0.048
Having Financial Statements (β_3)	0.45	0.06	7.80	0.001
Marketing with Technology (β_4)	0.35	0.05	7.00	0.001
R^2	0.87			

Source: Researcher estimation results
*Significant at 1%
**Significant at 5%

The use of FGDs for mentoring resulted in notable improvements in the factors influencing MSEs access to financing. The intercept (α) doubled from 0.75 to 1.50, reflecting an overall increase in financing accessibility. Post-mentoring, the p-value declined while the coefficient for the Level of Understanding of KUR (β_1) rose from 0.18 to 0.40, highlighting a stronger and more significant role of KUR knowledge. Similarly, the coefficient for OFS (β_3) increased from 0.22 to 0.45, demonstrating that having financial records became a more influential factor after the intervention. Additionally, the coefficient for Marketing with Technology (β_4) went up from 0.15 to 0.35, indicating the growing importance of digital marketing in easing access to finance. The model's explanatory power also improved, with the R^2 value rising from 0.65 to 0.87, showing a better fit in accounting for the variability related to financing accessibility. These results confirm that mentoring through FGDs effectively enhances the impact of key variables on financing access, making it easier for MSEs to obtain formal funding.

Control Group
Before FGD Assistance:
Estimation Results:
Ease of Access to Financing = 0.80 + 0.17 (Level of Understanding of KUR) + 0.004 (Age of MSEs) + 0.23 (Having Financial Statements) + 0.16 (Marketing Using Technology) + ε_3

Table 6 Estimation Results Before FGD Assistance

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Value of t	p-value
Intercept (α)	0.80	0.13	6.15	0.001
KUR Understanding Level (β_1)	0.17	0.06	2.83	0.006
Age of MSEs (β_2)	0.004	0.002	2.00	0.048
Having Financial Statements (β_3)	0.24	0.08	2.88	0.005
Marketing with Technology (β_4)	0.16	0.07	2.29	0.023
R^2	0.67			

Source: Researcher estimation results
*Significant at 1%
**Significant at 5%

After the Research Period (Without FGD Assistance):
Estimation Results:
Ease of Access to Financing = 0.82 + 0.18 (Level of Understanding of KUR) + 0.004 (Age of MSEs) + 0.24 (Having Financial Statements) + 0.17 (Marketing Using Technology) + ε_4.

Table 7 Estimation Results After the Research Period

Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	Value of t	p-value

Intercept (α)	0.82	0.13	6.31	0.000
KUR Understanding Level (β_1)	0.18	0.06	3.00	0.003
Age of MSEs (β_2)	0.004	0.002	2.00	0.048
Having Financial Statements (β_3)	0.24	0.08	3.00	0.003
Marketing with Technology (β_4)	0.17	0.07	2.43	0.017
R^2	0.67			

When comparing the period before and after the study, the control group exhibited only marginal changes in the model's coefficients. The intercept (α) rose slightly from 0.80 to 0.82, a change that lacks statistical significance. Similarly, the coefficients associated with the independent variables showed only minor increases. These minimal shifts suggest that in the absence of mentoring or targeted support, the variables under consideration had little to no effect in enhancing access to financial services..

Alongside the slight increase in the intercept, the R^2 value rose modestly from 0.52 to 0.59. This small change suggests that the model's explanatory power regarding variations in financing accessibility remained largely unchanged without the mentoring provided through FGDs. The critical importance of FGDs in strengthening the influence of key independent variables on financing access, thereby helping MSEs more effectively secure formal funding.

Moreover, following the implementation of mentoring via FGDs, a detailed analysis was carried out to assess how each independent variable affected financing accessibility for MSEs in Depok.

1. **MSEs' level of understanding of KUR**

Treatment Group:

After participating in the FGDs, there was a notable improvement in the regression coefficient related to MSEs' understanding of the KUR program. This increase was statistically significant, suggesting that the intervention had a meaningful impact on enhancing participants' comprehension of the financing scheme. This enhancement demonstrates that MSEs' understanding regarding KUR significantly increases the accessibility of finance. The significant rise in coefficient also signified the success of FGD assistance. Therefore, this enables MSEs to deepen their overall understanding, which is crucial for meeting credit requirements. This result aligns with Tambunan's (2019) earlier study, which emphasizes the key role of financial literacy in improving access to financing.

Control Group:

The control group demonstrated only a slight improvement in the coefficient related to understanding of the KUR program, and the change was not statistically meaningful. The minimal shift suggests that without targeted intervention, participants did not experience a significant enhancement in their knowledge or awareness of the financing scheme. This suggests that without mentoring interventions, there was no meaningful improvement in MSEs' understanding of the KUR program. This finding highlighted that financial literacy levels among MSE actors have remained largely unchanged. Consequently, this study underscores the critical need for educational intervention programs to support MSEs.

2. Age of MSEs

Treatment Group:

In the treatment group, the regression coefficient associated with the age of MSEs experienced a slight decline. While the change is statistically significant, the effect size remains minimal, indicating that age had only a marginal influence on the outcome, even after the intervention. This suggests that business age is not a major factor influencing access to financing, especially when supported by FGDs. While those variables showed meaningful improvements and stronger effects following the intervention, the age factor remained relatively static, contributing only a minor role in shaping access to financing, business age plays a relatively minor role. This is likely because financial institutions prioritize the current performance and future potential of the business over its longevity (Wibowo and Paramita, 2020).

Control Group:

In the control group, the coefficient for MSE age stayed constant, indicating that the age of the businesses had no change in its impact on the outcome in the absence of mentoring intervention. The statistical significance remained the same, confirming that without targeted support, the role of business age remained unchanged.

3. Have Financial Report

Treatment Group:

The regression model due to mentoring programs shows that coefficients for the ownership of financial statements exhibit significant increase from 0.22 to 0.45 with a *p* value of 0.001. This fact highlights the importance of financial statement ownership as one of the determinant aspects to obtain financing access easily because the structured and transparent report make it easier for the financial institutions to assess the overall creditworthiness. This FGD plays a crucial in providing comprehension to the MSEs actors regarding the financial statements, thus they can enhance their skills, preparing the financial statements properly. This fact is in line with the study that revealed that financial report has become one of the primary requirements on the MSEs financing application.

Control Group:

This minimal improvement indicates that, without mentoring, MSEs did not significantly develop their financial statement preparation skills, resulting in little impact on their access to financing. This outcome is consistent with the Financial Services Authority's 2017 report, which emphasizes that educational support is crucial for enhancing financial literacy and improving access to financial services, MSE actors' financial literacy and accounting skills tend to remain low and stagnant. Therefore, providing training focused on financial statement preparation is essential to improve MSEs' financial capabilities and increase their chances of obtaining financing.

4. **Marketing Using Technology**

Treatment Group:

The regression coefficient related to the use of technology in marketing saw a considerable rise, accompanied by strong statistical significance. This suggests that integrating technology into marketing efforts plays a crucial role in significantly improving access to financing for MSEs. This can happen as a digital platform can make MSEs become more visible and attractive, thus drawing the interest of financial institutions. This significant value also indicates the efficacy of FGD training to encourage MSEs to adopt technology acquisition in its marketing aspects. Study from Wijaya and Kurniawan (2020) also led to the same finding, which states that the increase in the marketing digitalization trend may boost the MSE's competitiveness and its opportunity to wider market.

Control Group:

In the control group, the regression coefficient for technology use in marketing experienced only a minimal increase, which was not statistically significant. This suggests that without targeted support, adopting technology in marketing did not meaningfully improve access to financing. This suggests that without support or intervention, MSEs did not significantly improve their adoption of technology in marketing. Moreover, without any interventions, the level of technology acquisition is also very low since MSE actors do not have any proper knowledge of digitalization conduct. This also becomes a barrier for MSEs to compete with other competitors and to obtain financing from the financial institutions. Therefore, several interventions in the form of assistance are required to facilitate capability enrichment regarding technology and digital acquisition.

The estimation results of Model 2, which utilized macro-level aggregate data from Depok City, focus on two key indicators: the poverty gap and the growth of the Gini coefficient. The findings related to the poverty gap are as follow:

Table 8 Estimation Result with Poverty Gap

Variables	Coefficient	P-Value
Total MSE	-1.67	0.0000
MSE Credit Value in Depok	-2.06	0.106
Inflation	-0.06	0.042
BI Rate	0.17	0.002
Constant	2.95	0.12

Source: Researcher estimation results
***Significant at 1%
**Significant at 5%

The macro-level analysis highlights that several important factors significantly affect the poverty gap in Depok City. Specifically, the number of MSEs, the volume of credit given to these enterprises, inflation rates, and the BI rate all play a role. Among these, the number of MSEs, the credit extended to them, and inflation are associated with a reduction in the poverty gap, indicating their positive contribution to alleviating poverty.

To further validate these results, it is recommended that the estimation model be tested again using the variable Y2, which corresponds to the Gini coefficient for Depok City, ensuring the robustness of the conclusions.

Table 9 Estimation Result with Coefficient Gini

Variables	Coefficient	P-Value
Total MSE	-2.05	0.0000
MSE Credit Value in Depok	-3.21	0.06
Inflation	-0.078	0.012
BI Rate	0.20	0.007

Constant	0.95	0.30

The robustness test of Equation 2, incorporating the Y2 for Depok City, confirms that the number of MSEs, the amount of credit extended to them, inflation, and the BI rate are significant determinants of income inequality in the area. Additionally, the findings show that the number of MSEs, credit volume, and inflation exert a negative influence on the poverty gap, indicating that these factors contribute to poverty reduction in Depok.

Number of MSEs

The results show that the number of X1 has a strong negative effect on the poverty gap in Depok City, with a regression coefficient of -1.67. This means that a one percent increase in the number of MSEs is linked to a decrease of 1.67 units in the poverty gap, holding all other variables constant, highlighting the important role MSE growth plays in poverty reduction.

The reduction in the poverty gap can be attributed to multiple factors, such as the expansion of local economic activities and enhanced access to education, both of which contribute to improving the overall economic well-being of the community. As MSEs expand, they generate more job opportunities, which financially empower local residents and reduce dependence on social welfare programs. Moreover, there is clear evidence supporting the positive link between educational attainment and poverty reduction;

Furthermore, the connection between higher educational attainment and poverty reduction is clear improved literacy levels often lead to better job opportunities and higher potential income, both of which are vital for sustainable development (Puspitasari, 2022).

Strengthening these efforts requires dedicated investment in technology access and infrastructure, providing communities with the essential tools to thrive within a digital-driven marketplace. Additionally, fostering collaboration between local enterprises and educational institutions can cultivate a skilled workforce tailored to the demands of emerging industries (2020, Lubis).

In addition, encouraging an innovative culture through incentives and mentorship programs can also enable MSEs actors in establishing fresh approaches towards regional problems, thus promoting economic expansion and community involvement (Jauhari & Perinsya, 2021). In addition to boosting the local economy, this all-encompassing strategy improves everyone's quality of life and builds a thriving, resilient community that can change with the times.

Credit score of MSEs in Depok City

The coefficient for the MSE X2 is -1.67, revealing a negative relationship with the poverty gap. This means that a 1% increase in credit provided to micro and small enterprises results in a reduction of the poverty gap. Specifically, an additional one billion rupiah in credit allocated to these enterprises lowers the poverty gap by 1.67 units. This finding highlights the role of increased microcredit availability in Depok as a factor that helps reduce poverty. Access to financial support is crucial for empowering local small business owners, fostering not only economic development but also enhancing social mobility, particularly for those entrepreneurs who struggle to enter the formal economic sector.

The role of institutions like financing from syariah financial institutions is essential as they provide funding that is suitable for those market traders and SMEs, which further can combate exploitative lending practices effectively (Setiawan et al., 2022).

Developing collaboration between MSMEs and larger firms is also important in sustaining further resilience by promoting resource sharing, and knowledge transfer, which in turn increase the influence of local enterprises to the overall economy activities. By all standards, these programs will potentially result in a more sustainable development and equal distribution of wealth

Moreover, targeted financial solutions are considered to not only provide economic improvement, but can also significantly enhance micro business' technical efficiency. Besides that, research also reveals that small firms can boost their operational efficiency and profitability by applying financial opportunity, such as Kredit Usaha Rakyat (KUR) which further will reduce poverty (Purmiyati et al., 2019). These financial initiatives can be adopted in accordance to meet the particular local needs by focusing on certain factors. This initiatives is conducted as an intervention that can reach the most vulnerable populations. Furthermore, Better resource management by local business owners may also potentially improve the entire community, establishing an environment that supports innovation and attainable collective prosperity.

As these financial initiatives are attractives, It is crucial to evaluate these financial ecosystem's so that it can generate wider effects on regional income disparity. Evidence shows that increased lending to MSMEs not only improves individual business performance quality but also significantly lessens income inequality among the community (Pamungkas et al., 2016). This relationship underscores the critical need to design financial services that prioritize accessibility and inclusivity, especially for marginalized populations who typically face barriers like the absence of conventional collateral or credit history. By providing customized assistance, policymakers can help create a fairer environment that broadens opportunities and supports sustainable progress across various social and economic groups. Moreover, as local business owners

enhance their skills and operations through initiatives like KUR, the overall economy gains strength and flexibility, laying a solid foundation for enduring and consistent growth.
Beyond enhancing operational efficiency, integrating financial literacy education is crucial to maximizing the advantages of credit initiatives. Providing entrepreneurs with essential knowledge in areas such as budgeting, investment strategies, and risk assessment empowers MSMEs to make informed choices that support lasting growth. Research shows a clear link between increased financial literacy and improved business performance and sustainability, especially in places like Depok, where many entrepreneurs struggle with restricted access to financial resources and lack of financial knowledge (Finatariani et al., 2024).
By integrating tailored financial solutions with robust educational support, MSEs are better positioned to achieve greater economic stability and sustainable growth over time. This method could help small businesses learn numerous insights, which would make things more stable and lead to a lot of progress. Also, partnerships between banks and schools can make these programs much more effective and have a bigger effect. This could create a place for entrepreneurs to learn the minimum tools they need to succeed in a complicated market.
The regression coefficient X3 is -0.06, suggesting a slight negative relationship with the poverty gap. In fact, the data suggests that rising inflation is linked to a reduction in the poverty gap. This unexpected outcome may be influenced by several factors, such as irregular price fluctuations, diminishing purchasing power, and the presence of policies that have yet to effectively address these economic challenges. This study aligns with the findings of Fauzi & Wicaksono (2022), which indicate that inflation plays a significant role in widening the poverty gap. This phenomenon primarily arises from the rising costs of essential goods, which are not matched by corresponding increases in income, disproportionately affecting low-income populations.
This indicates that as inflation rises in Depok city, the growth of the Gini coefficient tends to decrease. This phenomenon could be caused by various factors, including disparities in price increases, the effects on those with fixed incomes, and the presence of ineffective policies. This study aligns with the findings of Hidayat & Widyastuti (2022) that indicate inflation elevation may exacerbate the Gini coefficient, particularly affecting low-income groups, especially when it is not accompanied by fair income growth.
BI Rate
The regression coefficient X4 is 0.17, indicating a positive relationship with the poverty gap. This means that a 1% increase in the BI interest rate leads to a 0.17 unit expansion in the poverty gap. The BI Rate significantly influences the poverty gap by raising borrowing costs, reducing consumer purchasing power, and slowing economic growth. This finding is consistent with studies by Setiawan & Rahmawati (2021), which demonstrate that higher BI Rates exacerbate the poverty gap, particularly harming low-income MSEs who rely on affordable loans.
Additionally, the BI Rate has a unidirectional effect on income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient, meaning that increases in the BI Rate contribute to widening income disparities. This effect stems from the rising cost of borrowing, restricted capital availability, and shifts in investment patterns. Similar conclusions are supported by Kurniawan & Sari (2023), who find that higher interest rates worsen inequality, especially impacting already vulnerable groups. Consequently, as the BI Rate rises, the Gini coefficient tends to increase due to the greater difficulty in accessing affordable credit and capital.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown the struggles and challenges for MSEs in Depok to get the KUR program and the possible solution to overcome the problem. The results show that a lot of small and micro businesses are still having trouble getting access to KUR. This is mostly because MSEs don't fully understand KUR. They have trouble managing their money, and fully adapt with new technology. These problems make it harder for small businesses to grow, which may make the gap between the rich and the poor even bigger.
The result from the experimental method in dividing two groups, one that received FGDs, while the other group did not show a lot of different significant progress. The treatment group learnt more about KUR, got better at managing their money, and used technology better for marketing. These changes made it much easier for them to get to KUR and the money they needed to grow their business and keep it going.
Our regression result shows that micro and small businesses (MSEs) can get loans more easily if they comprehensively understand KUR and show that they know how to report their finances well. The age of the business doesn't have a significant influence, so It doesn't matter how long the business has been running. The most important is how well the owner manages and understands financial issues. The results show how important it is for MSEs to have access to programs that help them learn operational and managerial skills.
On the other hand, the control group that didn't get any mentoring resulted in missing understanding in how easy it was to get access in the KUR program. This shows how important it is to help MSEs on a regular basis so they can make the most of their rights and business opportunities. A lot of people will still have trouble with the financial system, especially when it comes to getting the money they need to pay for

their business programs. Because of this, schools, communities, and other organisations need to keep helping small and micro businesses, especially with financial education and technology utilization.

The results show that FGDs and other interventions can have lasting effects on the financial stability and growth of MSEs, not just short-term ones. These programs help small and medium-sized businesses get access to KUR programs, which helps reduce poverty and make the economy become more efficient. Incorporating digital tools and platforms into the assistance provided to micro and small enterprises would enhance these programs significantly. This would help them get used to the fast-paced recent economic globalizations.

This research supports that micro and small businesses (MSEs) need to keep getting training and help to improve their financial skills, especially when it comes to programs like KUR and their technological skills. The result can be a consideration for policymakers, banks, and development agencies to help MSEs in the future. With appropriate assistance, Micro and small businesses (MSEs) can help Indonesia's economy grow, lower inequality, and fight poverty.

Future studies need to look into how financial literacy and technological support affect the long-term success of micro and small businesses (MSEs). Micro and small businesses need to be adaptive and technological savvy to stay competitive in following economical improvement.

Policies should add support to MSEs in the form of skills and knowledge to become adaptive in the market, instead of just giving money. Future objectives need to aim for structural support to help small businesses, so MSEs could gain more benefit and bring more inclusive economic growth

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