Maximising the Market Value of Listed Agricultural Firms in Nigeria: The Additive Role of Firm Debt Level

Chiamaka L. Anaike
Lecturer, Department of Accountancy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
Lc.abaekobe-anaike@unizik.edu.ng

Chigbo Chinyere Frances
Principal Research Officer, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, National Cereals Research Institute, Badeggi, Niger State, Nigeria.
chigbofrances@gmail.com

Gilbert Ogechukwu Nworie
Chief Statistical Analyst, Ukoro Odah Statisticals, Amansea, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
dulcisgil@gmail.com
DOI 10.56201/ijebm.vol.11.no4.2025.pg304.321

Abstract
The study examined the effect of firm debt level on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The specific objective was to determine the effect of current liabilities and non-current liabilities on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. Ex-post facto research design was deployed in the study. The population and sample size were made up of all the five listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. Secondary data were sourced from the firms' annual reports from 2014-2023. In addition to the descriptive analysis carried out, the study used robust least square regression to test the hypotheses. It was found that: current liabilities have a positive and significant effect on market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria (β = 1.118704; p = 0.0000); non-current liabilities have a positive and significant effect on market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria (β = 1.365092; p = 0.0000). In conclusion, given the capital-intensive nature of agriculture, especially in areas like irrigation systems, mechanization, and processing facilities, the ability of firms to leverage debt may be seen as an indication of financial confidence, operational capability, and growth orientation. The study recommends that managers of agricultural firms should strategically manage short-term debt to finance working capital needs in ways that enhance operational responsiveness and productivity, thereby sustaining favorable market valuation.

Keywords: *Firm Debt Level, Market Value, Current Liabilities, Non-Current Liabilities*

1.0 Introduction

Agriculture remains a critical pillar in Nigeria's economic structure, contributing significantly to employment, food security, and gross domestic product (GDP). Despite the immense potential of the agricultural sector to drive sustainable economic development, firms operating in this sector—particularly listed agricultural firms—continue to grapple with structural, operational, and financial challenges. The capital-intensive nature of modern agribusiness, the seasonal variability of output, infrastructural inadequacies, climate uncertainties, and market volatility all create a complex operational environment that demands strategic financial decisions (Okunlola & Ayetigbo, 2024). One of the most consequential of these decisions is

the capital structure of firms—specifically, the level of debt they carry (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024).

Debt, as a component of capital structure, is a double-edged sword; it can serve as a powerful tool for financing expansion and enhancing profitability, or it can impose financial distress if not properly managed (Njoku & Lee, 2025). In the Nigerian context, access to affordable long-term capital is limited, and many firms, including those in agriculture, often resort to debt financing to support their operations and growth. Listed agricultural firms are expected to operate efficiently and maintain investor confidence, which is largely influenced by their financial decisions, performance, and market valuation. The role of effective debt management has gained increasing attention in contemporary business discourse, especially in an era marked by heightened financial volatility, rising interest rates, and investor sensitivity to corporate financial health (Juwono & Santoso, 2025). In today's business environment, characterized by rapid technological change, intense competition, and global economic uncertainties, firms must be prudent in managing their capital structure. The proportion of debt in a firm's financing mix has far-reaching implications for operational flexibility, investment capacity, and stakeholder perception. Thus, an optimal debt level is essential for maintaining solvency, maximizing shareholder value, and ensuring long-term sustainability (Kumbankyet, Anaman, Donkor & Akyen, 2025).

In agricultural firms, where cash flows are often seasonal and exposed to climatic and market risks, the decision to incur debt must be strategically aligned with the firm's capacity to generate returns and meet financial obligations (Okunlola & Ayetigbo, 2024). Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie, and Nworie (2025) argued that excessive reliance on debt may lead to financial distress, deter potential investors, and negatively influence credit ratings. Conversely, the judicious use of debt can signal managerial confidence, support capital investment, and serve as a lever for increasing firm value through the tax shield effect. Effective debt management, therefore, becomes a strategic imperative that not only supports operational efficiency but also enhances the firm's attractiveness in the capital market (Desai, 2024). In Nigeria, where the agricultural sector is central to economic diversification efforts, understanding how listed firms in this space utilize debt—and how this impacts their market value—is particularly relevant for investors, regulators, and policymakers.

The level of debt carried by a firm directly impacts its market value through several channels, both financial and perceptual (Desai, 2024). According to classical capital structure theories, particularly the Modigliani-Miller theorem with taxes, debt can increase firm value due to the tax deductibility of interest payments. However, this benefit must be weighed against the potential costs of financial distress and agency conflicts that may arise when debt levels become excessive (Njoku & Lee, 2025). In practice, the market often interprets high debt levels as a signal of risk, especially in industries like agriculture where income streams can be unpredictable. Investors tend to react to a firm's debt level as a proxy for its financial health and future earnings potential. A firm with an optimal debt structure may enjoy a higher market valuation as it is perceived to be managing its resources efficiently. On the other hand, a firm that is overly leveraged may suffer a decline in market value due to concerns over solvency and earnings volatility (Tamba, Safitri, Panjaitan, Athaya, & Azzahra, 2025).

In Nigeria, listed agricultural firms operate in an environment characterized by limited access to credit, high-interest rates, and regulatory bottlenecks (Okunlola & Ayetigbo, 2024). These conditions heighten the sensitivity of investors to the debt levels of firms within this sector. Furthermore, market valuation in emerging economies like Nigeria is often influenced by factors beyond fundamental performance, including investor perception, macroeconomic stability, and capital market depth. As such, the relationship between firm debt level and market value in Nigeria's agricultural sector may differ significantly from what obtains in more developed economies.

In an ideal business environment, firms are expected to optimize their capital structure in a manner that balances debt and equity efficiently to maximize shareholder wealth and enhance market value. The use of debt, when prudently managed, should serve as a financial lever that supports business expansion (Njoku & Lee, 2025), improves return on equity through the tax shield on interest, and signals confidence in future cash flows. Agricultural firms, in particular, are expected to harness debt to finance capital-intensive investments such as mechanized farming, supply chain infrastructure, and product innovation (Okunlola & Ayetigbo, 2024). When firms maintain an optimal debt level, they not only achieve cost-effective financing but also gain the trust of investors and the market, resulting in improved valuation and access to further capital. This aligns with modern corporate finance theories which posit that an optimal mix of debt and equity enhances firm performance and market worth (Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie & Nworie, 2025).

However, in the Nigerian context, listed agricultural firms often face limited access to affordable credit (Okunlola & Ayetigbo, 2024), and relatively high interest rates. These firms are frequently compelled to rely heavily on short-term borrowings or maintain suboptimal debt structures due to the volatile macroeconomic environment. Empirical observations show that many agricultural firms either carry excessive debt, exposing them to high financial risk, or shy away from debt altogether, thereby constraining their growth potential (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). The Nigerian capital market, being relatively underdeveloped, further compounds the situation by reacting unpredictably to firms' financing decisions. Consequently, investors may interpret high debt levels as a signal of financial distress rather than strategic leverage, thereby exerting downward pressure on the firm's market value. The lack of industry-specific evidence on how debt affects market valuation in this sector means that firms often operate without clear financial benchmarks or insights to guide their debt-related decisions.

Firms with poor debt management practices may experience reduced investor confidence, increased cost of capital, and lower valuation in the capital market. Overleveraged firms are more vulnerable to interest rate shocks, cash flow constraints, and bankruptcy risk—factors that collectively erode firm value and long-term sustainability (Cevik & Miryugin, 2022). Under-leveraged firms, on the other hand, may miss opportunities for strategic investments and expansion, thus underperforming in both competitive and capital markets. This situation ultimately hampers the growth of the agricultural sector and diminishes its contribution to Nigeria's economic development, hence the need for the study.

1.1 Objective of the study

The main aim of the study is to examine the effect of firm debt level on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To determine the effect of current liabilities on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.
2. To examine the effect of non-current liabilities on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

1.2 Hypotheses

H01. Current liabilities have no significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

H02. Non-current liabilities have no significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Issues

2.1.1 Firm Debt Level

Firm debt level refers to the total amount of financial obligations that a company owes to external parties, which are required to be repaid over time (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). It encompasses all borrowings that a firm has undertaken, including both short-term and long-term debts. The concept fundamentally represents the proportion of a firm's capital structure that is financed through borrowed funds rather than equity (Njoku & Lee, 2025). Debt can originate from a variety of sources such as bank loans, bonds, credit lines, and other financial instruments that impose a legal obligation to repay the borrowed amount, often with interest. The firm debt level is a critical indicator of a company's financial health, risk profile, and capital strategy (Abdulmumin, Kolawole & Yunus, 2024), influencing both internal operations and external stakeholder perceptions.

The debt level of a firm reflects its reliance on leverage to fund operations, investments, and expansions (Aggreh, Nworie & Abiahu, 2022). A firm with a high debt level typically has more borrowed capital relative to its equity base, indicating aggressive financing strategies that may offer higher returns but also come with increased financial risk (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). Conversely, a firm with a low debt level is considered to have a conservative approach to financing, relying more on equity capital or internally generated funds. Importantly, debt can be a strategic tool for enhancing profitability, especially when the cost of debt is lower than the return generated from its use (Cheng & Tzeng, 2011). However, the benefit of debt is counterbalanced by the obligation to make regular interest and principal repayments, regardless of the firm's earnings performance.

In corporate finance, firm debt level is typically measured using financial ratios such as the debt-to-equity ratio, debt ratio, and long-term debt to total assets (Abubakar, 2017). These metrics help assess the extent to which a firm is leveraged and its ability to meet debt obligations. The optimal debt level varies by industry, firm size, and economic environment, and achieving the right balance is central to financial decision-making. In sectors like agriculture, where income streams are seasonal and uncertain, maintaining a sustainable debt level becomes even more critical. In essence, the concept of firm debt level encapsulates the financial obligations that a firm must manage within its capital structure, influencing both its operational capabilities and its valuation in the capital market.

2.1.2 Current Liabilities

Current liabilities refer to the short-term financial obligations of a firm that are expected to be settled within one year (Putri & Dewi, 2024). These liabilities arise from the firm's day-to-day operations and typically include obligations such as trade payables (accounts payable), short-term loans, accrued expenses, taxes payable, and other similar commitments (Abdulmumin, Kolawole & Yunus, 2024). They are recorded on the liabilities side of the company's balance sheet and are crucial indicators of a firm's short-term financial health and liquidity. The concept of current liabilities underscores a firm's immediate financial responsibilities (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024) and its ability to honor those commitments using its current assets.

The nature of current liabilities makes them an essential component of working capital management. Firms must carefully monitor and manage their current liabilities to ensure operational continuity and avoid liquidity crises. For instance, failure to pay suppliers or service short-term loans on time could disrupt operations, damage credit relationships, or lead to legal complications. Because current liabilities must be settled within a relatively short time frame (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024), they directly impact a firm's cash flow and liquidity ratios, such as the current ratio and quick ratio. These ratios are widely used by analysts and creditors to assess a firm's ability to meet its short-term obligations without requiring additional financing.

Current liabilities often result from credit arrangements with suppliers or short-term borrowings from financial institutions, and they are considered a normal and necessary part of operating a business (Putri & Dewi, 2024). The distinction between current and non-current liabilities lies in the time frame for repayment, with current liabilities being due in the near term. Managing current liabilities effectively requires ensuring that the firm maintains sufficient current assets, such as cash, receivables, and inventories, to cover them as they come due. Poor management of current liabilities can lead to liquidity problems and may be interpreted by investors or creditors as a sign of financial instability.

2.1.3 Non-Current Liabilities

Non-current liabilities, also known as long-term liabilities, represent financial obligations that a firm is not expected to settle within one year (Putri & Dewi, 2024). These liabilities are due over a longer period and typically include long-term loans, bonds payable, deferred tax liabilities, lease obligations, and pension liabilities. They are fundamental elements of a firm's capital structure and are used to finance major investments such as property, plant, equipment, or strategic acquisitions that support long-term growth. Non-current liabilities are recorded on the balance sheet and are distinct from current liabilities due to the extended time frame for repayment (Mwiti & Gitagia, 2023).

The concept of non-current liabilities embodies the long-term financial commitments that a firm undertakes to support its operational and strategic goals (Abdulmumin, Kolawole & Yunus, 2024). These liabilities often involve substantial amounts of capital and are associated with structured financing arrangements that span several years (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). Unlike current liabilities, which relate to the firm's operational liquidity, non-current liabilities are more aligned with the firm's investment and growth strategy. Their existence reflects a firm's financial planning and its approach to leveraging debt for future benefits. Long-term borrowing allows firms to access large sums of money that may not be available through internal sources or equity alone.

Managing non-current liabilities effectively is critical to sustaining financial health over time (Putri & Dewi, 2024). Since these liabilities typically involve interest payments over a long duration, they affect a firm's long-term solvency and profitability. Excessive non-current liabilities can lead to increased financial risk, especially if the firm's future earnings are uncertain or if interest rates rise (Mwiti & Gitagia, 2023). However, when managed properly, long-term liabilities can serve as a stable and cost-effective source of capital. They can also positively impact a firm's market value if used to fund investments that generate returns exceeding the cost of debt.

In financial analysis, the ratio of non-current liabilities to total assets or equity is often used to assess leverage and long-term financial stability (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). The maturity structure of debt also plays a role in understanding a firm's risk exposure. In sectors such as agriculture, where investments in infrastructure or equipment may require long-term financing, non-current liabilities are essential. They enable firms to spread costs over time while aligning repayment with future revenue streams.

2.1.4 Market Value

Market value refers to the monetary worth of a firm, asset, or security as determined by the dynamics of the open market (Sanders, 2018; Ayuba, Bambale, Ibrahim & Sulaiman, 2019). It reflects the price a willing buyer is prepared to pay and a willing seller is willing to accept for a specific item at a given point in time. Unlike intrinsic or book value, which is based on accounting records or theoretical assessments, market value is driven by real-time supply and demand forces. It is particularly relevant in financial markets, where it serves as a crucial indicator for investors, analysts, and policymakers in assessing the current standing of a

company (Yemi & Seriki, 2018). Market value is not static; it fluctuates frequently based on market sentiment, investor perceptions, macroeconomic conditions, and company-specific developments.

In the context of publicly listed companies, market value typically refers to market capitalization (Permata & Alkaf, 2020). This is calculated by multiplying the current share price by the total number of outstanding shares. For instance, if a firm has 100 million outstanding shares, each trading at ₦50, the market value or market capitalization would be ₦5 billion. This figure provides a snapshot of how the investment community values the firm at a particular moment. Importantly, it reflects not just tangible assets but also intangibles such as brand reputation, managerial competence, growth prospects, and competitive positioning. As such, market value often exceeds or falls below the book value, especially when future profitability or risk factors are factored into investor expectations (Damodaran, 2024).

Market value is also widely used to assess other financial instruments and assets such as bonds, real estate, and commodities. For bonds, the market value is influenced by prevailing interest rates, credit ratings, and issuer credibility. For real estate, it is shaped by location, demand trends, and broader economic indicators. Regardless of the asset class, market value represents what someone is willing to pay in an open and competitive marketplace (Chen, 2025). It thus becomes a reflection of collective investor sentiment and risk assessment at any given time. The continuous fluctuation of market value serves as a real-time indicator of market confidence, concerns, or enthusiasm toward specific sectors or companies.

2.1.5 Effect of Firm Debt Level on Market Value

The level of debt a firm carries can send strong signals to investors about its financial strategy, stability, and ability to generate returns, thereby affecting its market valuation either positively or negatively. When a firm utilizes debt financing wisely, it can enhance shareholder value by leveraging the tax deductibility of interest payments (Njoku & Lee, 2025) and improving return on equity. This is especially true when the returns generated from the debt-financed investments exceed the cost of borrowing. In such cases, the firm's increased earnings and improved profitability can lead to a rise in investor confidence and a corresponding increase in share price, thereby boosting market value. This effect is grounded in capital structure theories such as the Trade-Off Theory, which argue for an optimal debt level that maximizes firm value.

However, the relationship between debt level and market value is not linear. Excessive debt can increase financial risk, particularly if the firm's earnings are volatile or if macroeconomic conditions are unstable (Sulaiman & Khalid, 2024). High debt levels raise concerns about a firm's ability to meet interest and principal repayments, which can lead to reduced investor confidence, credit rating downgrades, and a fall in stock price. In such scenarios, the firm's market value may decline as investors re-evaluate its risk-return profile. Furthermore, over-leveraging can lead to agency conflicts between creditors and shareholders, and in extreme cases, financial distress or bankruptcy (Abdulmumin, Kolawole & Yunus, 2024).

Several studies such as those by Njoku and Lee (2025), Desai (2024), and Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie, and Nworie (2025) reported that higher levels of debt—particularly long-term debt—tend to diminish firm value. Njoku and Lee (2025) found a negative association between leverage and firm value on the Korea Composite Stock Price Index using robust econometric techniques. Similarly, Desai (2024) showed that both short-term and long-term borrowings reduce market value in the capital goods sector, while Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie, and Nworie (2025) confirmed that long-term debt significantly erodes shareholder value in Nigerian oil and gas firms. These findings highlight a consistent pattern where debt, especially when excessive, is perceived unfavorably by investors, possibly due to the associated financial risk and interest burden.

Contrastingly, some findings provide a more nuanced or even positive view of debt financing. For example, Abdulmumin, Kolawole, and Yunus (2024) found that long-term debt had a positive and significant effect on the performance of Nigerian consumer goods firms, suggesting that when managed effectively, long-term debt can support growth and profitability. Likewise, Tamba, Safitri, Panjaitan, Athaya, and Azzahra (2025) found a positive, albeit statistically insignificant, relationship between the debt-to-equity ratio and firm value in Indonesia, which may imply that in some cases, debt can be a neutral or even beneficial financing tool. Sulaiman and Khalid (2024) added further complexity by showing that while short-term and long-term debts negatively affect return on assets, total debt (when combined) positively affects firm performance, implying that optimal debt structuring might be more important than the volume of debt itself.

Furthermore, several studies emphasize the role of debt type and financing strategy in determining outcomes. Juwono and Santoso (2025) discovered that firms preferring bond financing over bank loans experienced better market valuation, pointing to investor preferences for transparency and accountability in capital markets. Okanda, Zhang, Sarfo, and Amankwah (2025) also highlighted the varying impacts of different debt forms, finding significant relationships between long-term and total debt and performance indicators like return on equity and return on assets. Meanwhile, Kumbankyet, Anaman, Donkor, and Akyen (2025) and Shehu (2025) both found negative effects of short-term debt on firm performance in Ghana and Nigeria, respectively, emphasizing the risk of over-reliance on short-term borrowing. Putri and Dewi (2024), however, observed that while short- and long-term debts individually lacked significant impact on palm oil firms' income, their combined effect was significant, again underscoring the importance of debt mix and strategic alignment.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Trade-Off Theory of capital structure which was developed as an extension and refinement of the Modigliani and Miller (MM) theorem in the 1960s and 1970s (Cekrezi, 2013). While the MM proposition initially argued in 1958 that capital structure is irrelevant in a perfect market, it was later modified to incorporate the effects of taxes, bankruptcy costs, and agency problems. Economists such as Kraus and Litzenberger (1973) were among the pioneers who formalized the Trade-Off Theory by suggesting that firms strive to balance the tax advantages of debt financing with the costs associated with potential financial distress (Glover & Hambusch, 2014). The theory has since become one of the most widely accepted frameworks for understanding corporate financing behavior, especially in imperfect markets where taxes and bankruptcy risks are present.

The central postulation of the Trade-Off Theory is that there exists an optimal capital structure at which a firm maximizes its value (Cekrezi, 2013). According to the theory, firms benefit from the tax shield provided by debt financing because interest payments are tax-deductible, thereby reducing the firm's taxable income and enhancing after-tax earnings. However, increasing debt also raises the risk of financial distress and bankruptcy, which imposes direct and indirect costs on the firm. Therefore, the theory suggests that firms should weigh the marginal benefit of additional debt against the marginal cost of potential financial distress (Howe & Jain, 2010). When the marginal cost equals the marginal benefit, the firm achieves its optimal debt level. At this point, firm value is maximized, and any further increase or decrease in debt would result in a decline in market value.

The Trade-Off Theory is highly relevant to the present study, which investigates the effect of firm debt level on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. These firms often face a complex financial environment marked by high operational risk, limited access to equity markets, and fluctuating cash flows due to seasonal agricultural cycles. By applying the Trade-Off Theory, the study provides a theoretical lens through which the debt behavior of these firms

can be examined. It helps to understand whether listed agricultural firms in Nigeria are using debt optimally to enhance their market value or whether their current debt levels expose them to excessive financial risk that could erode investor confidence and diminish firm valuation. The theory thus supports the core objective of the study by explaining how the balance between the benefits and costs of debt affects firm value in a real-world, developing economy context.

2.3 Empirical Review

Njoku and Lee (2025) conducted a study to evaluate how debt capital influences the market value of firms listed on the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI). The researchers used Tobin's Q as an indicator of firm value and applied advanced econometric methods including Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), Two-Stage Least Squares (2-SLS), and the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) to ensure robustness. Their findings indicate that an increase in debt capital tends to reduce firm value, suggesting a negative relationship between leverage and valuation in the Korean corporate environment.

Tamba, Safitri, Panjaitan, Athaya, and Azzahra (2025) assessed the relationship between debt policy and firm value among companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange from 2019 to 2023. The study employed a quantitative research design and used multiple regression analysis to examine both the individual and joint effects of independent variables on firm value. The analysis revealed that while the Debt-to-Equity Ratio (DER) had a positive effect on firm value, the influence was not statistically significant. This implies that, although increased leverage might offer some benefits, it does not guarantee higher firm valuation in the Indonesian market context.

Juwono and Santoso (2025) explored the impact of financing decisions—specifically, the preference between bank loans and bond issuance—on the value of infrastructure sector firms. The study, based on secondary data from 62 companies and comprising 112 observations between 2021 and 2022, utilized multiple linear regression to test its hypotheses. The findings show that the choice of debt instrument plays a significant role in determining firm value. Companies opting for bond financing tend to enjoy higher market valuation, potentially due to the greater transparency associated with bond markets, which boosts investor confidence.

Kumbankyet, Anaman, Donkor, and Akyen (2025) examined how short-term debt impacts the financial performance of manufacturing firms listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange over the period from 2015 to 2023. Combining descriptive and causal research approaches, the authors used audited financial statements as the data source and applied Return on Assets (ROA) as the performance metric. The results demonstrated a significant negative relationship between short-term debt and ROA, indicating that over-reliance on short-term financing could harm a firm's profitability.

Okanda, Zhang, Sarfo, and Amankwah (2025) investigated the relationship between various forms of debt financing and firm performance using a dataset obtained from the CSMAR database. The study specifically addressed econometric concerns such as endogeneity and multicollinearity by applying Generalized Two-Stage Least Squares (G2SLS) and instrumental variable techniques. Their findings indicate that both long-term debt to total assets (LTDTA) and total debt to total assets (TDTA) significantly influence firm performance metrics such as Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Assets (ROA), although the nature of these relationships varied across debt types.

Shehu (2025) analyzed the influence of capital structure on the financial performance of industrial goods firms listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group. The study covered all 13 firms in the sector over the period from 2013 to 2023 and employed an ex post facto research design. Financial data were gathered from company reports and analyzed using Panel Least Squares regression. The study found that both short-term and long-term debt financing negatively and

significantly affect financial performance, highlighting the potential risks of high leverage in the Nigerian industrial sector.

Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie, and Nworie (2025) carried out a study to determine whether long-term debt influences the erosion of shareholder value among listed oil and gas firms in Nigeria. The researchers adopted an ex-post facto research design and purposively selected five companies from a total of nine firms listed on the Nigerian Exchange. Data were gathered from annual reports covering the period between 2014 and 2023. Using panel-estimated generalized least squares, the findings showed that higher levels of long-term debt relative to assets significantly reduce shareholder value, with a coefficient of -42.56871 and a p-value of 0.0003. Similarly, the ratio of long-term debt to equity was found to have a negative and statistically significant influence on shareholder value, with a coefficient of -5.441092 and a p-value of 0.0005.

Sulaiman and Khalid (2024) investigated the link between debt capital and the financial performance of agricultural firms listed in Nigeria from 2013 to 2022. The study used short-term debt, long-term debt, and total debt to represent debt capital, while return on assets (ROA) was used as the performance indicator. Firm size was introduced as a moderating variable. Employing an ex-post facto research design and advanced inferential statistics, the analysis applied robust fixed effect models and Driscoll-Kraay standard errors. Results indicated that both short-term and long-term debts had a significantly negative effect on ROA, whereas total debt was found to exert a positive and significant impact on the same metric.

Jibrin, Abubakar, and Abubakar (2024) explored the impact of long-term debt on the financial performance of cement manufacturing firms. The main objectives were to assess the effects of long-term debt on return on assets and return on equity. The study reviewed empirical findings from recent literature between 2019 and 2023. Using a qualitative review method, the authors analyzed results from various studies and concluded that long-term debt tends to negatively affect both return on assets and return on equity in the cement sector. This suggests that increased reliance on long-term debt may undermine financial performance in this industry.

Desai (2024) focused on the relationship between debt financing and firm market value, while also examining whether firm size influences this relationship. The study used Tobin's Q and market-to-book value ratio as indicators of firm market value, and both short-term and long-term debt ratios to represent debt financing. A dataset comprising 164 companies in the capital goods sector was analyzed over a ten-year period from 2010 to 2019. The research utilized panel least squares regression, incorporating both fixed and random effects models. Findings revealed that both forms of debt—short-term and long-term—had a significantly negative impact on market value, suggesting that borrowing may reduce firm valuation in capital-intensive industries.

Putri and Dewi (2024) examined the influence of short-term and long-term debt on the operating income of palm oil companies. Using a quantitative approach with panel data multiple regression, the study relied on financial statements sourced from the Indonesia Stock Exchange for the years 2019 to 2023. Short-term debt and long-term debt were used as independent variables, while operating income was the dependent variable. The analysis revealed that, when considered separately, neither short-term nor long-term debt had a statistically significant effect on operating income. However, when analyzed jointly, both variables demonstrated a significant collective impact on the operating income of these firms.

Abdulmumin, Kolawole, and Yunus (2024) investigated how debt financing influences the corporate performance of Nigerian consumer goods companies over an eleven-year period from 2011 to 2022. The study employed descriptive statistics alongside panel regression with fixed effects to analyze the dataset. Results indicated that long-term debt had a positive and statistically significant effect on firm performance, with a coefficient of 0.469729 and a p-value of 0.0311. Firm size also exhibited a positive influence. Conversely, short-term debt and loan quality were found to have significantly negative impacts, with short-term debt showing a

coefficient of -0.023417 and a p-value of 0.0124. The study concludes that while long-term debt may contribute positively to firm performance, short-term liabilities and poor loan quality are detrimental.

2.4 Gap in Literature

In sectors such as agriculture, where firms are subject to seasonal income fluctuations, weather uncertainties, and commodity price volatility, the effect of debt level on market value is particularly sensitive. Investors may be wary of firms that carry heavy debt burdens in such unpredictable environments. As a result, the capital market response to debt levels is closely tied to perceptions of risk management, strategic use of debt, and the firm's long-term earnings potential. Despite the growing body of literature examining the effect of debt financing on firm performance and market value, a significant gap remains in sector-specific and geographically focused research—particularly within the agricultural sector of Nigeria. While Njoku and Lee (2025), Tamba, Safitri, Panjaitan, Athaya, and Azzahra (2025), and Desai (2024) have extensively explored the relationship between debt and market value in Asian and capital-intensive markets, their findings lack direct relevance to the unique financial and structural dynamics of Nigeria's agricultural firms. Similarly, the studies by Shehu (2025), Ikwuo, Nwite, Nworie, and Nworie (2025), and Abdulmumin, Kolawole, and Yunus (2024) concentrated on industrial and consumer goods firms in Nigeria, neglecting agriculture despite its distinct seasonal cash flows and capital requirements. Although Sulaiman and Khalid (2024) made notable efforts to assess debt's impact on agricultural firm performance using ROA, their study focused on profitability rather than market valuation metric. Furthermore, research by Kumbankyet, Anaman, Donkor, and Akyen (2025), Putri and Dewi (2024), and Jibrin, Abubakar, and Abubakar (2024) examined debt effects on performance indicators such as operating income and return on equity but failed to isolate current and non-current liabilities in the context of firm value. Thus, there is a clear gap in the literature regarding the disaggregated impact of current and non-current liabilities on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria—an issue this study aims to address.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed an ex-post facto research design to examine the effect of firm debt level on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The ex-post facto design is suitable because it involves the use of historical data and does not require manipulation of variables. This approach enabled the researcher to establish causal relationships between firm-level debt components (current and non-current liabilities) and firm market value using previously recorded financial data.

The population of this study comprises all agricultural firms listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX) as of December 31, 2023. According to NGX's daily stock listing, there are five (5) agricultural firms actively traded. These firms form the entire population of the study, as shown in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Population of the Study

1. Ellah Lakes
2. FTN Cocoa Processor
3. Livestock Feeds
4. Okomu Oil Palm
5. Presco

Source: Nigerian Exchange Group (2023)

Given the small size of the population, a census sampling technique was adopted. This means all five listed agricultural firms were included in the sample, ensuring comprehensive analysis and eliminating sampling error. This study relies solely on secondary data extracted from the annual financial reports of the sampled firms for the period 2014 to 2023. These reports were sourced from the official websites of the companies, as well as from the Nigerian Exchange Group's online repository. The data included information on current liabilities, non-current liabilities, and market value indicator.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values) to understand the distribution and characteristics of the variables. For inferential analysis, robust least square regression was employed to evaluate the effect of current liabilities and non-current liabilities on the market value of the firms. The justification for the use of robust least squares was because of the outliers observed in the dataset. Key outputs such as adjusted R-squared, Rn-squared stat. and p-values were used to interpret the results at a 5% significance level.

The operational definitions and measurements of the study variables are outlined in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Operationalization of Study Variables

Variable	Measurement
Market Value (MV)	Number of ordinary shares X share price
Current Liabilities (CL)	Amount of short-term debts
Non-current Liabilities (NCL)	Amount of long-term debts

Source: Researcher's Compilation (2025)

To address the study objectives, one regression model was developed as follows:

$MVit = \beta0 + \beta1Clit + \beta2NCLit + \epsilon it$ _____eqi

Where:

MVit = Market value of firm *i* at time *t*

CLit = Current liabilities of firm *i* at time *t*

NCLit = Non-current liabilities of firm *i* at time *t*

β0 = Constant

β1,β2 = Coefficients of independent variables

ϵit = Error term

The hypotheses were tested at a 5% significance level. The decision rule is as follows:

- If the p-value is less than 0.05, reject the null hypothesis.
- If the p-value is greater than or equal to 0.05, fail to reject the null hypothesis.

4.0 Data Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

	Market Value (₦'000)	**Current Liabilities (₦'000)**	**Noncurrent Liabilities (₦'000)**
Mean	36674819	7007422.	8519549.
Median	7100000.	3011521.	3366231.
Maximum	259000000	60544232	58058632
Minimum	440000.0	2848.000	0.000000
Std. Dev.	59532613	10574720	12628191
Skewness	2.289783	3.062710	2.212033
Kurtosis	8.136215	14.51072	8.129290

Jarque-Bera	98.65233	354.2028	95.58744
Probability	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
Observations	50	50	50

Source: Statistical Output from Eviews 10 (2025)

In Table 4.1, the descriptive analysis of **Market Value** shows a wide range and considerable variation in the market valuation of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The mean market value is approximately ₦36.67 million, suggesting that, on average, the market capitalization of these firms is relatively moderate. However, the minimum value is as low as ₦440,000, while the maximum reaches ₦259 million, indicating significant disparity among the firms in terms of investor valuation. The standard deviation of ₦59.53 million further confirms the high variability in market values across firms, which could result from differences in firm size, financial performance, investor perception, or listing age. The skewness value of 2.29 implies a strong rightward skew, meaning that while most firms have market values below the mean, a few large firms significantly pull the average upwards. The kurtosis value of 8.14 indicates a leptokurtic distribution—one with fat tails and a sharp peak—suggesting the presence of outliers or extreme values. The Jarque-Bera probability of 0.000 signals that the market value distribution significantly deviates from normality, confirming the impact of extreme values and asymmetry in the dataset.

For **Current Liabilities**, Table 4.1 reveals a mean of about ₦7.01 million, showing that agricultural firms in Nigeria typically maintain moderate levels of short-term obligations. The minimum current liability reported is ₦2,848, while the maximum reaches over ₦60.54 million, which points to notable differences in how firms manage short-term debts and obligations. The standard deviation of ₦10.57 million is even higher than the mean, reinforcing the evidence of large variability across the sample. The skewness value of 3.06 shows a very high positive skew, meaning most firms carry relatively small current liabilities, while a few firms have exceptionally high short-term obligations. A kurtosis of 14.51 underscores an extremely peaked distribution with very heavy tails, suggesting significant outliers in current liability levels. Like market value, the Jarque-Bera probability of 0.000 confirms a non-normal distribution, implying that extreme cases are influential in the dataset and warrant robust statistical techniques in analysis.

Turning to **Noncurrent Liabilities**, the descriptive statistics in Table 4.1 show a mean of ₦8.52 million, which is slightly higher than the mean for current liabilities, suggesting a tendency among firms to rely somewhat more on long-term financing than on short-term obligations. The range is also considerable, with a minimum value of zero and a maximum of ₦58.06 million. The presence of zero as a minimum highlights that some firms have no long-term liabilities, possibly indicating debt-averse policies or early-stage operations. The standard deviation of ₦12.63 million reflects a substantial level of dispersion, similar to that seen in current liabilities. The skewness of 2.21 shows that the data is positively skewed, with a few firms reporting significantly higher long-term debts. A kurtosis of 8.13 again points to a leptokurtic distribution, with extreme values influencing the overall pattern. The Jarque-Bera probability value of 0.000 affirms that noncurrent liabilities do not follow a normal distribution, emphasizing the heterogeneity in the financial structures of the firms studied.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

The presence of outliers and non-normality in the data, as evidenced by the high skewness, excessive kurtosis, and statistically significant Jarque-Bera test values ($p = 0.000$) for market value, current liabilities, and noncurrent liabilities in Table 4.1, justifies the use of robust least squares (RLS) regression in testing the hypotheses (Alma, 2011). Traditional ordinary least squares (OLS) regression assumes that errors are normally distributed and sensitive to extreme

values, which can distort coefficient estimates and reduce the reliability of statistical inference (Alma, 2011). Given that the distributions of all variables exhibit heavy tails and are significantly skewed, RLS provides a more reliable estimation technique by minimizing the influence of outliers and heteroscedasticity. This method enhances the robustness and validity of the findings by ensuring that the parameter estimates are not unduly influenced by extreme observations (Alma, 2011), making it a suitable choice for analyzing the relationship between firm debt levels and market value in this study.

The two hypotheses tested are restated as follows:

H01. Current liabilities have no significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

H02. Non-current liabilities have no significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria.

Table 4.2 Test of Hypotheses

Dependent Variable: Market Value
Method: Robust Least Squares
Date: 04/20/25 Time: 22:06
Sample: 2014 2023
Included observations: 50
Method: MM-estimation
S settings: tuning=1.547645, breakdown=0.5, trials=200, subsmpl=3,
refine=2, compare=5
M settings: weight=Bisquare, tuning=4.684
Random number generator: rng=kn, seed=583994971
Huber Type I Standard Errors & Covariance

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
Current Liabilities	1.118704	0.132962	8.413709	0.0000
Noncurrent Liabilities	1.365092	0.111341	12.26045	0.0000
C	-597222.8	1454688.	-0.410550	0.6814

	Robust Statistics		
R-squared	0.243692	Adjusted R-squared	0.211509
Rw-squared	0.890424	Adjust Rw-squared	0.890424
Akaike info criterion	112.3173	Schwarz criterion	120.7187
Deviance	6.72E+15	Scale	7850925.
Rn-squared statistic	488.1499	Prob(Rn-squared stat.)	0.000000

Source: Statistical Output from Eviews 10 (2025)

Table 4.2 presents the result of the robust least squares (RLS) regression conducted to examine the effect of current and non-current liabilities on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The model's overall validity is supported by the adjusted R-squared value of 0.211509, which implies that approximately 21.2% of the variations in the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria are explained by current and non-current liabilities. While not very high, this level of explanatory power is acceptable given the complexity of market value determinants in financial studies. Additionally, the Prob(Rn-squared stat.) is 0.000000, which is statistically significant at the 5% level, confirming that the model as a whole is valid

and that the independent variables jointly have a statistically significant explanatory effect on market value. This affirms the appropriateness of the model for hypothesis testing.

As per the constant term (C), the coefficient of -597,222.8 has a p-value of 0.6814, which is greater than the 5% significance level. This indicates that when both current and noncurrent liabilities are held constant at zero, the market value of the firms would hypothetically be negative.

Focusing on current liabilities, the coefficient is 1.118704, which means that a one-naira increase in current liabilities is associated with an approximate ₦1.12 increase in the market value of listed agricultural firms, assuming all other factors remain constant. This shows a positive marginal effect, suggesting that current liabilities, when used effectively, may signal financial agility or growth support in the short term. More importantly, the p-value is 0.0000, which is below the 5% significance threshold, indicating that the effect of current liabilities on market value is statistically significant. Thus, the alternate hypothesis is accepted that current liabilities have a positive and significant effect on market value.

Regarding non-current liabilities, the coefficient is 1.365092, indicating that a one-naira increase in non-current liabilities leads to an estimated ₦1.37 increase in market value, ceteris paribus. This positive marginal effect suggests that long-term borrowing may be used to finance productive investments that enhance firm value in the eyes of investors. The p-value is also 0.0000, signifying a statistically significant effect at the 5% level. Consequently, the alternate hypothesis is accepted that non-current liabilities have a positive and significant effect on market value.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study found that current liabilities have a positive and statistically significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. This outcome suggests that, in the Nigerian agricultural sector, short-term debt obligations such as trade payables and short-term loans may be effectively utilized as working capital to support day-to-day operations. Firms might be using current liabilities to finance immediate productive activities, like procurement of raw materials, wages, and logistics, which can drive output and revenue. In emerging markets like Nigeria, where capital access is often constrained, efficiently managed short-term financing can signal operational efficiency and agility to investors, thereby boosting firm valuation. Moreover, since agricultural firms often operate in seasonal cycles, timely use of short-term funds may be interpreted as strategic financial flexibility, which the market could reward with a higher valuation.

This finding aligns with several empirical studies. For instance, Abdulmumin, Kolawole, and Yunus (2024) found that short-term debt significantly reduces firm performance, but this contrasts with the present study, possibly due to differences in sectoral focus—consumer goods versus agriculture. On the other hand, Sulaiman and Khalid (2024) reported that short-term debt had a significantly negative effect on return on assets (ROA) in agricultural firms, which is in direct contradiction to this study's finding regarding market value. However, their focus was on internal performance metrics, whereas this study evaluated investor-perceived value, indicating that short-term debt might negatively affect internal financial efficiency but not necessarily external market valuation. Furthermore, Kumbankyet et al. (2025) observed a negative relationship between short-term debt and performance in Ghanaian manufacturing firms, also differing from the Nigerian context of this study. Lastly, Putri and Dewi (2024) found that short-term debt did not significantly influence operating income in palm oil firms, implying that context-specific financial environments and sector dynamics may moderate these effects. Therefore, while the literature presents mixed evidence, the current finding adds a new dimension by highlighting a potentially favorable perception of short-term liabilities in Nigeria's agricultural market.

For non-current liabilities, the study revealed a positive and statistically significant effect on the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. This implies that long-term debt, such as bonds and term loans, is being utilized in ways that add value to these firms from an investor's perspective. Long-term financing may allow firms to engage in capital-intensive projects like mechanized farming, storage facility construction, or supply chain infrastructure development—investments that are likely to yield returns over time. The market may view such debt-financed expansion as a signal of growth potential and long-term stability, especially if these projects are strategically aligned and well-managed. In developing economies where equity markets may be less accessible or underdeveloped, long-term debt offers an essential avenue for scaling operations, thereby contributing positively to firm valuation.

This result finds strong support in prior empirical research. Abdulmumin, Kolawole, and Yunus (2024) reported that long-term debt had a positive and statistically significant effect on the performance of Nigerian consumer goods firms, reinforcing the argument that long-term financing supports growth and stability. Similarly, Okanda et al. (2025) confirmed that long-term debt significantly affects firm performance, although the direction of the effect varied based on context—suggesting long-term liabilities can be beneficial if strategically deployed. Contrarily, Ikwuo et al. (2025) found that long-term debt significantly erodes shareholder value in Nigerian oil and gas firms, indicating that the sectoral dynamics and the purpose for which long-term debt is employed are critical in determining its market effect. Additionally, Desai (2024) observed that long-term debt had a negative influence on market value in capital-intensive industries, highlighting the risks associated with debt overhang and fixed financial obligations. Despite these contrasting views, Juwono and Santoso (2025) noted that firms using bond financing (a form of long-term debt) achieved higher valuations, possibly due to the transparency and investor confidence that comes with formalized debt markets. These varying perspectives emphasize that the positive effect found in this study is plausible within the agricultural sector, where long-term funding can be a vital driver of structural and operational improvements that enhance market perception.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings of this study imply that both short-term and long-term debt play a constructive role in shaping the market value of listed agricultural firms in Nigeria. The positive and significant effects observed for current and non-current liabilities suggest that investors interpret the use of debt—regardless of its maturity—as a viable financial strategy within the agricultural sector. This outcome could reflect a market perception that debt financing enhances firm operations, facilitates expansion, and boosts productivity. Given the capital-intensive nature of agriculture, especially in areas like irrigation systems, mechanization, and processing facilities, the ability of firms to leverage debt may be seen as an indication of financial confidence, operational capability, and growth orientation. As a result, the market rewards these firms with a higher valuation, acknowledging debt as a tool for strategic resource allocation and competitiveness.

Furthermore, the findings carry broader implications for capital structure dynamics within the agricultural sector. The significance of both current and non-current liabilities in explaining market value signals that the timing and structure of debt obligations may not be as critical to investor perception as their effective utilization. This challenges traditional assumptions that short-term debt is riskier and potentially damaging to firm value, at least within this specific industry and national context. It also indicates a level of trust among market participants in the financial management practices of listed agricultural firms, perhaps due to improved corporate governance, financial transparency, or successful past performance associated with debt usage. Thus, we recommend that:

1. Given the positive and significant effect of current liabilities on market value, it is recommended that managers of agricultural firms should strategically manage short-term debt to finance working capital needs in ways that enhance operational responsiveness and productivity, thereby sustaining favorable market valuation.
2. In view of the positive and significant effect of non-current liabilities on market value, it is advised that listed agricultural firms should adopt long-term debt as a deliberate financing mechanism for capital investments and expansion initiatives that align with growth trajectories valued by the market.

References

Abdulmumin, B. A., Kolawole, D. K., & Yunus, A. B. (2024). Enhancing Corporate Performance through Debt Financing: Evidence from Nigerian Consumer Goods Firms. *Economic Studies & Analyses/Acta VSFS*, *18*(1).

Abubakar, A. H. M. A. D. U. (2017). Financial leverage and financial performance of quoted industrial goods firms in Nigeria. *KASU Journal of Management Science*, *8*(2), 89-108.

Aggreh, M., Nworie, G. O., & Abiahu, M. F. C. (2022). Debt structure and financial performance: evidence from listed construction firms in Nigeria. *Journal of Banking*, *10*(2), 145-195.

Alma, Ö. G. (2011). Comparison of robust regression methods in linear regression. *Int. J. Contemp. Math. Sciences*, *6*(9), 409-421.

Ayuba, H., Bambale, A. J. A., Ibrahim, M. A., & Sulaiman, S. A. (2019). Effects of Financial Performance, Capital Structure and Firm Size on Firms' Value of Insurance Companies in Nigeria. *Journal of Finance, Accounting & Management*, *10*(1).

Cekrezi, A. (2013). A literature review of the trade− off theory of capital structure. *Iliria International Review*, *3*(1), 125-134.

Cevik, S., & Miryugin, F. (2022). Leverage shocks: Firm-level evidence on debt overhang and investment. *Review of Economics*, *73*(1), 79-101.

Chen, J. (2025, February 11). *What is market value, and why does it matter to investors?* Investopedia. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/marketvalue.asp

Cheng, M. C., & Tzeng, Z. C. (2011). The effect of leverage on firm value and how the firm financial quality influence on this effect. *World Journal of Management*, *3*(2), 30-53.

Damodaran, A. (2024). *The little book of valuation: How to value a company, pick a stock, and profit*. John Wiley & Sons.

Desai, R. (2024). Nexus Between Debt Financing and Market Value Moderated by Firm Size: Panel Data Evidence from India. *Vision*, *28*(5), 633-644.

Glover, K., & Hambusch, G. (2014). The trade-off theory revisited: On the effect of operating leverage. *International Journal of Managerial Finance*, *10*(1), 2-22.

Howe, J. S., & Jain, R. (2010). Testing the Trade-off Theory of Capital Structure. *Review of business*, *31*(1).

Ikwuo, A. K., Nwite, I. M., Nworie, G. O., & Nworie, F. N. (2025). Shareholder value diminution through long-term debts: Evidence from the Nigerian oil industry. *Annals of Management and Organization Research (AMOR)*, *6*(3), 271-285.

Jibrin, A., Abubakar, S. U., & Abubakar, B. (2024). Effect of Long-Term Debt on Financial Performance of Cement Manufacturing Companies: A Review. *African Journal of Management and Business Research*, *16*(1), 69-82.

Juwono, H. P., & Santoso, E. B. (2025). The Effect Of Debt Choice On Firm Value. *Jurnal Akuntansi Kontemporer*, *17*(1), 53-66.

Kraus, A., & Litzenberger, R. H. (1973). A state-preference model of optimal financial leverage. *The journal of finance*, *28*(4), 911-922.

Kumbankyet, J., Anaman, P. D., Donkor, C., & Akyen, B. (2025). The Impact of Short-Term Debt on the Performance of Manufacturing Companies Listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange. *International Journal of Latest Technology in Engineering, Management & Applied Science*, *14*(1), 41-50.

Mwiti, M. E., & Gitagia, F. (2023). Long term debts and financial performance of manufacturing firms listed at Nairobi Securities Exchange, Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Economics and Finance*, *3*(10), 267-278.

Njoku, O. E., & Lee, Y. (2025). Debt Capital and Dividend Policy as Complementary Indicators of Firm Valuation. *International Journal of Financial Studies*, *13*(1), 18.

Okanda, T. L., Zhang, J., Sarfo, P. A., & Amankwah, O. (2025). Exploring the Nexus between Debt Financing and Firm Performance: A Robustness Analysis Using Instrumental Variables. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering Research and Science*, *12*(02).

Okunlola, O. C., & Ayetigbo, O. A. (2024). Impact of agricultural financing on agricultural growth sustainability in Nigeria. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, *58*(3), 171-203.

Permata, I. S., & Alkaf, F. T. (2020). Analysis of market capitalization and fundamental factors on firm value. *Journal of Accounting and Finance Management*, *1*(2), 59-67.

Putri, Q. A. R., & Dewi, E. R. C. (2024). The Effect Of Short-Term Debt And Long-Term Debt on The Income of Palm Oil Stock Issuers. *Al-Kharaj: Journal of Islamic Economic and Business*, *6*(2).

Sanders, M. V. (2018). Market value: what does it really mean?. *Appraisal Journal*, *86*(3).

Shehu, M. M. (2025). Effect of Financial Structure on Financial Performance of Listed Industrial Goods Companies in Nigeria. *Open Access Library Journal*, *12*(4), 1-22.

Sulaiman, A. S., & Khalid, K. M. (2024). Moderating Effect Of Firm Size On Debt Capital And Financial Performance Of Listed Agricultural Firms In Nigeria. *FULafia International Journal of Business and Allied Studies*, *2*(1), 91-106.

Tamba, R. R., Safitri, T. N., Panjaitan, G. O., Athaya, N. S., & Azzahra, A. S. (2025). The Impact of Debt Policy, Profitability, and Company Size on Firm Value. *International Journal of Economic Research and Financial Accounting*, *3*(2).

Yemi, A. E., & Seriki, A. I. (2018). Retained earnings and firms' market value: Nigeria experience. *The Business & Management Review*, *9*(3), 482-496.